



## Bellwether Magazine

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### Dr. James A. Thomson, V'85, on "Time" Cover

# A Message from the Dean

Welcome to a new academic year full of inspiration and challenge.

Last year was a singularly fruitful one for the School. Many will remember that in August 2000, Governor Ridge committed \$18 million of Commonwealth funds towards the \$48 million cost of the new Teaching and



Research Building. Through the great generosity of our good friends and benefactors, we now have \$30 million in hand; two-thirds of the way to our

goal! I am thrilled and grateful, particularly to the School's Board of Overseers who were instrumental in securing a significant proportion of these funds. In the next 12 months we must work hard to sustain this momentum and raise the remaining balance of \$18 million.

Funding for the new \$3.1 million Scott Equine Sports Medicine Building at New Bolton Center was accomplished in the past year, thanks to the broad support that New Bolton Center enjoys in the equine community and to the vigorous leadership of Herbert and Ellen Moelis in securing funds. Herb Moelis is a distinguished member of the School's Board of Overseers. Construction of the Scott Building, which will greatly improve our ability to care for equine patients, is now underway and should be completed by the middle of next year in time for the celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of New Bolton Center.

In January we opened the new Swine Unit at New Bolton Center with the goal of expanding research in the area and providing more opportunities for our students to study swine medicine. I thank Dr. Tom Parsons for successfully spear-heading this project and am happy to announce that Dr. Gary Althouse, one of the best known experts in swine reproduction in the U.S., has joined him on the faculty. Tom and Gary are now in a position to provide our students with one of, if not, the best programs in swine medicine in the country. I take delight in this prospect.

Another initiative is the new aquaculture

facility nearing completion at New Bolton Center. Drs. Leon Weiss and David Nunamaker are leading this project which will be named in honor of Robert F. Fairchild, another illustrious member of the School's Board of Overseers, who generously contributed to the cost of the building. Among other things, it will be used by faculty in the Center for Animal Health and Productivity to study nutrition in farmed fish. In doing so, they will apply the skills they have gained in dairy nutrition to the aquatic environment since the principles of nutrition are the same. Studies on infectious diseases of fish will also take place in the building. These are important initiatives for improvements in nutrition and infectious disease control. These are two of the most critical problems facing the aquaculture industry today.

Buildings which support our educational, research, and clinical programs are just one facet of the rich intellectual environment that defines the School. In their surroundings,

students, faculty and staff create the School's vigorous scholarly milieu and it is this critical attitude that our graduates take with them as they enter the veterinary profession and become leaders. James Thomson, the scientist who discovered how to culture human embryonic stem cells much in the news today, was a V.M.D./Ph.D. student at the School from 1981 to 1988 and is one such leader. We take pride in his accomplishments and draw great satisfaction in the belief that the School's dynamic scholarly environment contributed to Jamie's success. Our challenge is to preserve the vibrancy of this intellectual environment so that the School may continue to inspire the Jamie Thomsons of the 21st century. I eagerly look forward to working with you to secure this goal.

**Alan M. Kelly**

*The Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine*

## Dr. James A. Thomson, V'85, on *Time* cover

**Dr. James A. Thomson**, a graduate of the Veterinary Medical Scientist Training Program at the University of Pennsylvania, has recently been named as America's best in cellular biology research by *Time* magazine.

Dr. Thomson received his V.M.D. in 1985 and his Ph.D. in molecular biology in 1988. He is a University of Wisconsin-



Madison developmental biologist who also serves as a professor of anatomy in the UW-Madison Medical School and as the chief pathologist at the Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center on the UW-Madison campus.

According to *Time*, "Biologist James Thomson's wizardry with embryonic stem cells had not only raised hopes for a medical panacea but also set off the national debate on whether that potential public good

provided the moral justification for the infusion of massive amounts of public money. Already, Thomson's own personal balancing act — juggling scientific imperative and ethical caution, technical brilliance and moral quandary — had made him one of our choices for *Time's* list of America's Best in science and medicine." Read "Stem Winder," a profile of Dr. Thomson on the CNN/Time web site at <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/americasbest/science.medicine/pro.jthomson.html>.

Since joining the Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center, Dr. Thomson has conducted pioneering work in the isolation and culture of non-human primate and human embryonic stem cells, undifferentiated cells that have the ability to become any of the cells that make up the tissues of the body. He directed the group that reported the first isolation of embryonic stem cell lines from a non-human primate in 1995, work that led his group to the first successful isolation of human embryonic stem cell lines in 1998.