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Recent Grad Leads Veterinary Medical Alumni Society

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Recent Grad Leads Veterinary Medical Alumni Society

Eric M. Bregman, V'95, considers himself an "answers guy." Good thing ... because as the newest—and probably youngest ever—president of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society (VMAS) of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Bregman will have to provide some critical answers regarding the most pressing needs and concerns of the School in the future.



During his term as VMAS president—May 2001 to May 2003—Dr. Bregman and his colleagues on the Executive Board will focus on several key issues, including the new Teaching and Research Building, student tuition costs, and the clinical education of students that incorporates teaching practical skills.

With over half of his 20-or-so fellow board members over the age of 45, Dr. Bregman, 30, is undaunted by his youth. Rather, he considers it an asset. "Boards can get stagnant," he explains. "We've made a real effort to bring in

some new blood and some fresh ideas."

Furthermore, he's accustomed to dealing with older veterinarians: His father, Jack, V'66, is his long-time mentor and partner in practice.

After growing up on a horse farm in New York's Catskill Mountains, Dr. Bregman headed for the University of Houston, where he studied biology for three years before being admitted to the School of Veterinary Medicine. He completed a private-practice internship and then joined his father's practice, which he helped expand from one to four offices in Brooklyn and Long Island and a feline hyperthyroidism treatment center.

Two of the four Bregman practices treat solely cats. Dr. Bregman calls feline practice "a nice way to practice veterinary medicine"—for the aesthetics, if nothing else. When it comes to carpeting, laminated flooring, office space and staffing needs, he says, cats easily nudge out dogs.

Although he works 50-plus hours a week (and attends 25-30 New York Yankees games a year), Dr. Bregman credits practice ownership with giving him the flexibility to devote time to the Executive Board, whose membership requires a three-year commitment of attending

five meetings annually.

Like his veterinary degree, Dr. Bregman's VMAS membership is a legacy to his father, who is a veteran Executive Board member and former president. Starting out upon graduation as a "Pacesetter"—a board position reserved each year for one or two recent grads—Dr. Bregman, who is also active in the New York City and state veterinary medical societies, considers his VMAS participation a way of returning a very big scholastic favor. He shares his father's appreciation for the School: "My dad says, 'The School gave me everything I have by educating me. They didn't have to do that for me. They chose me.'"

"The opportunity for learning here is unmatched by any school in the country," exclaims the younger Bregman, who credits the School with teaching him how to think logically about cases. "I may not have been the best at placing a catheter when I first got out of school," he recalls, "but when a dyspneic cat came in, I knew what needed to be done."

The School, too, can breathe easy as Dr. Bregman assesses the School's needs and the help VMAS can provide. —J.C.G.

American Veterinary Medical Association Annual Convention Alumni Reception

Nearly 100 School of Veterinary Medicine alumni and their guests attended an alumni reception during the American Veterinary Medical Association Annual Convention in Boston on July 15, 2001. Alumni from as far away as Puerto Rico (**Jose M. Garcia Blanco, V'84**) and Montana (**Robert M. Frey, V'77**, with wife, Pat) attended the reception. Dean Alan M. Kelly welcomed everyone to the reception and spoke about the School's current activities and thanked alumni for their continued support of their alma mater.

