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Opportunity Scholarship Donor Profile: James S. Harper III, V'72

Lori S. Mann
University of Pennsylvania

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by Lori Spencer Mann, V'95

On any given day, you might find **James S. Harper III, V'72**, director of animal care at Brown University in Providence, R.I., where he has worked since 1985, engaging in a myriad of administrative duties, providing clinical support to the lab animal department that he oversees, or advising his undergraduate students and mentoring those who might have an interest in attending veterinary school. He is responsible for more than one Brown undergraduate attending vet school at Penn. Dr.



Harper's day might also include participating in a research project, teaching his experimental surgery class, or devising a novel anesthetic technique on some exotic or lab animal species.

On that same day, you also might find him offering fatherly advice to one of his four children (his oldest son is a freshman at Brown), taking a call from the Rhode Island 1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team (RI-1 DMAT), of which he is a member, communicating with his colleagues in the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, squeezing in his volunteer paramedic/firefighter duties with the fire department in his hometown of Sterling Mass., or planning a night out with his wife, Robin, to attend the ballet.

From Dr. Harper's humble beginnings to becoming the first child in his family to graduate from college, through his years at Penn State and early entry into Penn Veterinary Medicine, and from his service in the Army to time spent in Central America, a NIH fellowship, and working at Brown, he amassed a diverse portfolio of service and experience. In fact, the Governor of Rhode Island recognized the entire team, including Dr. Harper, for their work with RI-1 DMAT at Ground Zero. During a 12-day period, he was able to use his emergency medical skills to help the many other rescue personnel [human and canine] on duty.

Dr. Harper is proud of Penn and strongly believes in the value of the education he received. He continues to be deeply motivated and inspired by his students at Brown and those he has mentored at Penn through the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP). Established in 1998, the Program is designed to foster scholarship support, provide mentoring opportunities for students and offer alumni a unique opportunity to establish a meaningful connection with future colleagues.

According to Dr. Harper, it was a natural decision for him to fund an Opportunity Scholarship as he enjoys giving back what he had received. He also is cognizant of the high debt incurred by students today and how it can impact their career choices. Dr. Harper's motivation to give back is also inspired by those who motivated him as a student, including **Charles W. Raker, V'42** (current chair of the OSP committee), **Wilbur B. Amand, V'66**, **Paul Berg, V'62**, **William B. Boucher, V'40**, **William**

Donawick, Alan M. Klide, V'65, **William Moyer**, and **Lawrence R. Soma, V'57**.

Editor's Note: Established in 1998, the Opportunity Scholarship Program provides a \$10,000 award (\$2,500 for each of four years) to a qualified student with demonstrated need while teaming the student with the donor or group of donors in a mentoring process. The program currently supports 40 students. For information on how you can support the future of veterinary medicine through this program, please contact Dori Myers at the School at 215.746.7438 or via e-mail at dmyers@vet.upenn.edu.

Nathan D. Harvey, V'03

(Editor's Note: Nathan D. Harvey, V'03 is the recipient of the Anniscole Opportunity Scholarship given by Benson B. Martin, V'80. Following are his comments at the 2002 Rush Shippen Huidekoper Dinner last November.)

My name is Nate Harvey. I am a fourth year food animal major from Newfield, Maine. Having grown up near my grandfather's small dairy farm in southern New Hampshire, I've always had a particular interest in dairy cows. Since I was a little kid, it has been my dream to attend veterinary school and return to New England to practice dairy medicine. I'm interested in cows from a production standpoint, from a medical and surgical standpoint, and equally as important, from an animal welfare and animal comfort point of view. It is important for us to realize that our animal production systems are becoming more intensified to meet the growing food demands of our growing population. However, it also is important that we continue to maintain adequate standards for animal comfort as this happens. One of the many valuable lessons I've learned on my grandfather's farm is that "happy cows make more milk," and it is true for any animal production system – comfortable, healthy animals equal better production.

I am glad to have maintained the important smaller-farm lessons and values that I learned growing up, and I look forward to combining them with the important concepts of progressive production medicine that I'm learning here at Penn. Too often, people consider these two lines of thought (i.e. small farm values vs. large farm production) to be in strict conflict with each other, when actually they both play important roles together in successful production medicine.

This brings me to what I really want to emphasize tonight. While I am fortunate enough to finally be achieving my goals of pursuing dairy medicine, I could never have made it this far without the unending support of the alumni from Penn's Vet School. I am particularly grateful for the generosity

of **Dr. Ben Martin, V'80**, my Opportunity Scholarship sponsor. I can honestly say that I would not be standing here at this great School, if not for his selflessness, as well as that of the many alumni here that contribute to relieve students' educational expenses. To all the alumni here tonight who donate your time, your mentorship, and your hard-earned money to the students of this School, I would like to remind you that your giving is tremendously appreciated by the students. Your generosity is not taken



lightly, and in many cases (such as my own) it can make all the difference between a student not realizing his/her goals, and a student going

all the way. If I could possibly emphasize this enough, I would say it a thousand times... thank you, thank you.

In conclusion, needless to say, the Huidekoper dinner has become a special annual landmark for me. Each fall I have looked forward to meeting the alumni, enjoying the guest speakers, and cheering on the new first-year Opportunity Scholars. However, my anticipation for this year's dinner was bittersweet at first, as I realized with disappointment that it would be my fourth and final Huidekoper dinner. Then I quickly realized that, on the contrary, this is not to be my final dinner at all. I will be coming back to enjoy Huidekoper dinners in the future, as a scholarship donor rather than a recipient. If I can make half the difference in my recipient's life that my donor and all of you have made in mine, it will be worth it many times over.

Thank you.