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## Message From the President of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society

James V. Stewart  
*University of Pennsylvania*

## President's Message

This past summer was eventful for our Veterinary School and for our future with it. Many events—some past but most still to come—will affect us as alumni.

The temporary closure of New Bolton Center was serious in its impact. Making sure that it was disinfected and *Salmonella*-free for its reopening was a tribute to the tenacity of the School's faculty and staff. In a day and age when "white-wash" is a chosen color and "spin" is the explanation of choice, neither of those activities was in evidence during the closure. The spirits of honesty, truth, and candor enveloped the School, from Jacques Jenny, Bob Brody, Joan O'Brien, Bill Boucher, Eric Tulleners, and many more I never knew, smiled broadly as we did "the right thing"—and spent a lot of money doing it. New Bolton Center is back, it is better, and you should be proud of how this event was handled.

In other news, the ground has been broken, the foundation is being laid, and the new Teaching and Research Building is starting to take shape. Our ability to provide a top environment for our students and for talented teachers doing research will rise. As in the past, Penn Veterinary Medicine will draw the great young people who ensure our future as scientists, veterinarians, and animal lovers. That is how it has been and how it must always be to keep our place in the academic world of the future.

A year ago, at the beginning of this great experience as President of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society, I said that I wanted the School's interns and residents to be included in our alumni family. It is officially acknowledged they do hold alumni status. Now, we need their contact information for the School's records. The Office of Development and Alumni Relations and many of us are trying to track them down. If you have contact information for any intern or resident, please send it to Joshua E. Liss, Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, at <lissj@vet.upenn.edu>.

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**James V. Stewart, V'68,  
President, Veterinary  
Medical Alumni Society**

I am also pleased to share with you news that the School will establish listservs this fall for each class up to the 50th reunion class and one for all alumni who graduated 50 or more years ago. The listservs will allow class agents or any class member to send a message to their entire class by using only one email address. The service will be offered free, and you will receive subscription information later this fall. If the School does not already have your email address, get it to them. Life is too short not to be in contact with the people who have journeyed with us on what may have been the most formative four years of our lives. Keep in touch with your class and your School; we are all better for it.

Lastly, we still have the "money" thing. The Kresge Foundation has challenged the School's alumni and friends to raise \$13 million by October 1, 2005 to earn a grant of \$1.5 million.

This is an all-or-nothing challenge: one dollar short, no Kresge money is given. If you have ever considered increasing your support or even making your first donation, now is the time to do it! If your clients have ever thought of making a gift to the School, now is the time to approach them. All gifts and pledges to the School will count; will your commitment be the one that triggers the \$1.5-million windfall?

Let me close by saying that I had the pleasure to address the first-year class during New Student Orientation in late August. I met many bright, optimistic, and eager young people, just like we were. I told them we knew what they were facing and would help in any way. I closed by telling them they were at the best veterinary school in the world, a legacy they should never forget. They applauded. It doesn't get any better than that!

## Alumni Meet the Landeau Challenge

In the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2004, alumni rose to the generous challenge of **Laurie J. Landeau, V'84 WG'84**. If alumni contributed a total of \$150,000 in new and increased gifts to the Veterinary Student Scholarship Fund, Dr. Landeau would contribute \$150,000 to the School. In issuing her challenge, Dr. Landeau said, "Our School depends on the generosity of each and every one of us, no matter the level of our giving, to ensure that the next generation of V.M.D.s carries Penn's excellence into the future."

Alumni were clearly inspired by Dr. Landeau's challenge, as 727 of them contributed more than \$155,000 in new and increased gifts. Of those alumni, 472 had not made a gift to the Veterinary Student Scholarship Fund in the previous fiscal year. The new donors also included 68 members of the Class of 2004 who made a gift even before they graduated from Penn.

According to Dr. Landeau, "I was overwhelmed not only by the warm response from our alumni, but also by the reaction of current students. It is astonishing how many of the senior class came through with personal donations. Numerous stu-

dents from all classes have stopped me to tell me personally how much they appreciated having someone offer this opportunity both to raise awareness of the critical need for more tuition aid and to increase the level of alumni generosity at the same time. One, a first-year Phone-a-thon caller, told me that being able to use the Landeau Challenge made her job so much easier—but she wanted to know where we would find someone to offer a similar challenge in the new fiscal year! Fortunately, we do have a challenge to encourage even more involvement via the recently awarded Kresge Foundation Challenge Grant."

Dr. Landeau, chair of the School's \$100-million fundraising campaign, *Building New Levels of Excellence*, is optimistic that the response of alumni to her challenge bodes well for the School in meeting the conditions to earn the Kresge challenge grant of \$1.5 million for the new Teaching and Research Building. As of August 31, to obtain the grant funds, the School must raise \$10 million for any initiative or priority from its alumni and friends by October 1, 2005.