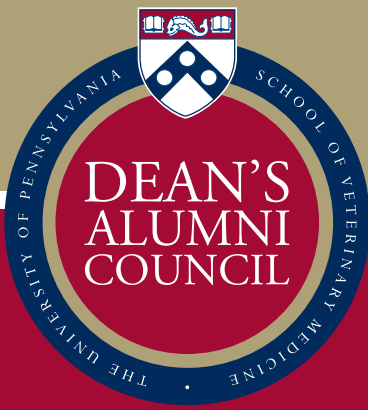




4-1-2011

Dean's Message

Joan C. Hendricks
University of Pennsylvania



A Message from the Dean

Dear Penn Veterinary Medicine Alumni:

As the Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine, but moreover as an alumna of the School of Veterinary Medicine, I am keenly aware of the importance of a strong connection between the School and Penn Veterinary Medicine alumni. From our first graduating class in 1887 to our 124th class in 2011, the Veterinary Medical Alumni Society (VMAS) has existed to keep all graduates connected to the School long after graduation.



As a School, we have successfully navigated through two very challenging fiscal years, recreating ways to achieve our goals in an environment of shrinking resources. In all areas of how we teach our students, conduct research and provide care for our clients and patients, our alumni have been critically important in sharing ideas, sending to us the best and brightest students, supporting our projects and carrying our message to the world. Our alumni remain the living history of the School – our ears and eyes beyond Penn, and the biggest champions of our future. There are even more opportunities and challenges ahead for Penn Veterinary Medicine, and the time is ideal to ask how we can engage our graduates even more deeply in the pursuit of our highest priorities.

To intensify our connection with alumni, in January 2011 I created the **Dean's Alumni Council** – a specific group of alumni volunteers with a robust demographic representation to help us move our projects forward and to serve as liaisons for the School to other alumni. As this group replaces the current VMAS Executive Board structure, it will allow the opportunity to involve a broader network of alumni leaders and ambassadors who are well-informed about Penn Veterinary Medicine today, who will bring the School fresh ideas while amplifying our voice to others, and who will find ways to interact with current students, faculty and administration meaningfully. I have invited current and former VMAS Board leaders to serve as the Founding Members of the Dean's Alumni Council in recognition for their outstanding service to the School, in addition to other alumni who have expressed interest and enthusiasm in the School's future.

My goal is to activate this initial core group of volunteers to work with me on innovative, flexible approaches to strengthen our alumni partnerships, presence in the community and interaction with students, in addition to other projects that alumni, students and faculty identify together. In the future, it is my hope to continue to evolve the group membership, which will allow a continuous flow of ideas and an opportunity for many to participate. I will be seeking new interest as the effort grows, but am grateful to those who have initially agreed to join me as we launch this new initiative.

I look forward to communicating again in the near future about the Council's special projects, and continue to welcome your ideas on ways alumni can help the School, and the School can support its alumni.


—JOAN C. HENDRICKS, V'79, GR'80

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*Denotes a Founding Member