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Dedication of the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital

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Hurricane Isabel's strong winds prevented the School from holding the dedication festivities in the Old Vet courtyard. Instead, more than 300 guests assembled on September 19 in Huntsman Hall to celebrate the dedication of the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Many members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and the Senate were present, as were judges, state officials, and family and friends of the late Matthew J. Ryan.

University President Judith Rodin, CW'66, spoke eloquently about Matthew Ryan, his dedication to serve all the citizens of Pennsylvania, his love for his family, and his devotion to Magic, his dog. "We are so grateful for his unflinching commitment to this School, which is truly a great treasure for the Commonwealth," Dr. Rodin remarked. "He protected it and supported it, but I think what is so important to us in putting Matt's name on this building is that we also honor Matt so much for his statesmanship and for his integrity."

Governor Edward G. Rendell, C'65, warmly remembered Speaker Ryan. "Today this is a dedication ceremony where I can be as passionate as every one of us in this room is because it's about things that most of us hold very dear and love very

much. One was Matt Ryan—and, as Dean Kelly and President Rodin said, it didn't matter what political party you were from, it didn't matter



whether you were a new member of the legislature or an older member of the legislature, whether you were mayor or county commissioner. If you dealt with Matt Ryan, you learned to respect him, then like him, and, over the course of time, love the tremendous qualities of character and

integrity and that tremendous sense of humor that's part of that."

Speaker of the House John Perzel could not be present for the ceremony. He asked **Roger Nick**, former chief of staff for Matthew Ryan, to read a letter from him:

"Greetings! I am pleased to send best wishes to all who gathered to dedicate the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

"Matt was my good friend and mentor, and I still get an ache in my heart and a tear in my eye when I think of him. Matt is looking down at this ceremony today grinning from ear to ear, he was proud to support this fine institution. When the leaders of the General Assembly would meet to work on the state budget Matt always made sure that Penn's Vet School's research, development, and care got sufficient funding to maintain its world-class status. He

knew that the reputation and continuation of this school was not only important to the people of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth, but the nation and the world. Just this month, there was a story in *The New Yorker* magazine about the quality of this School and the staff.

"Matt's devotion to this School stems from his attachment to his black Lab, Magic. Many times when he was holding court in his office, he would point at photo of Magic and then tell us a story about the dog; he just loved that dog, and the dog loved him.

"Many of you at today's dedication who also were at Matt's funeral will never forget driving past Matt's house on Providence Avenue after the church service and seeing Magic on the lawn watching us drive by, perhaps thinking that the next car would bring his best friend home. Magic's loyalty to Matt was precious, honest, and rare—and so was Matt. Every time we drive by this Hospital, we will be reminded of his legacy.

"Through all his years in government service, he was always a diplomat, always thoughtful, and always motivated by an abiding desire to do what was right. He was completely trustworthy, and he could tell a good joke. Matt Ryan served Pennsylvania with the greatest dedication and distinction. We will remember him for his courage; his devotion to Pat, his children, and his dog; and his indomitable desire to be fair."





The Ryan family unveils a picture of the signage at the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital.



Dean Alan M. Kelly, Vice Dean Barry Stupine, and Judge Jenkins.



Herbert and Ellen Moelis, Christine Connelly, and Cuyler Walker.



Governor Edward G. Rendell.



Governor Rendell greets Matt Ryan's grandchildren.



Former Pennsylvania Governor Mark Schweiker and The Honorable Patricia Jenkins, widow of Matthew J. Ryan.



University President Judith Rodin.