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## Veterinary Leadership Program Celebrates Five Years

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## Veterinary Leadership Program Celebrates Five Years

BY JOHN DONGES

The Penn Executive Veterinary Leadership Program is designed for veterinarians who are interested in refining their leadership skills and contributing at a high level to the global public health discussion. The format of the program allows veterinarians to learn a variety of skills in order to influence public policy and expand the profession's impact.

Penn Vet Dean Joan Hendricks has long recognized the need for veterinarians to advocate for the importance of their expertise. "We have an exciting opportunity to elevate the perception of the veterinary profession," she said. "Although our work in treating animals is important, our larger mission of supporting global public health is paramount. Despite our extremely broad role as veterinarians, our leadership potential is often overlooked. This program is designed to help us make our voices heard."

In 2006, Dean Hendricks reached out to her fellow deans across Penn's campus for inspiration and assistance. Pat Harker, Dean of the Wharton School at the time, put her in touch with members of the Executive Education department at Wharton and their chief education officers. Together, they discussed ways to develop a training program for veterinarians that would address such diverse topics as leading in public forums,

connecting animals with society, and addressing health and economy on a global scale. The collaboration between these two powerhouses – Penn Vet and the Wharton School – was poised for great success.

Dean Hendricks was then introduced to Dr. Kathy Pearson, Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics at Penn, who had experience in directing leadership programs for the health profession. These programs tackled issues such as how to shape thinking in order to increase impact and how to build the health profession's ability to help communities on a large scale. Dr. Pearson enthusiastically partnered with Penn Vet to tailor the program for veterinarians, which led to the creation of the Penn Executive Veterinary Leadership Program, first offered in June 2009.

Since its inception, the program has attracted thought leaders in veterinary medicine from throughout the country. Representatives from prominent organizations such as the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), the Pennsylvania Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Center for Public Health Initiatives have participated. In addition, Penn Vet faculty members and

alumni are selected to attend. International participants and non-veterinarians were invited to join the 2013 conference, which further enriched the experience for all involved.

“Participants have come from all walks of life, and in some unexpected ways,” said Dean Hendricks. “I’ve found that everyone really thinks beyond themselves. And best of all, the program is inspiring.”

The success of the program has been, in large part, due to the quality and strength of the speakers, who have expertise in topics ranging from business and economics to health and medicine. Dr. Charlotte Lacroix, for example, is a veterinarian, lawyer, and CEO. Marketing scholar Patricia Williams, agricultural business expert Dr. Gregg BeVier, leadership expert Dr. Nancy Rothbard, and intergroup relations expert Dr. David Berg are among other distinguished speakers who have participated in the program, providing a well-rounded experience for those in attendance.

About the program, Dr. Kim Hammond, Chief Medical Officer and founder of Falls Road Animal Hospital in Baltimore, MD, said, “It gave me the tools to make me so much more competitive. The instructors were cutting-edge.”

Dr. Mitchell Moses, Director of US Veterinary Hospital Services at Pfizer Animal Health, said, “The level of instruction and peer collaboration is outstanding.”

To celebrate the program’s fifth year, organizers are adding an alumni component to the 2014 program. The 80-plus graduates



of the program will have the opportunity to enjoy an alumni reception, a reunion publication, and an extended session with Dr. David Berg, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine.

When reminiscing about past programs, Dean Hendricks fondly remembers a moment during one of Dr. Gregg BeVier’s presentations. “He was talking about work in Africa, and it turned out that four other people in the room had made connections in Africa, as well,” she recalled. “It crystallized for everyone that vets do more than you expect. We make a significant global impact. And that’s what makes this program so fantastic. It’s a truly transformative experience.”

For more information and to apply for the Penn Executive Veterinary Leadership Program, visit: [www.pennvetleadership.com](http://www.pennvetleadership.com).

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For more information or to enroll, please contact Katrina Clark at [execed@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:execed@wharton.upenn.edu) or call +1.215.898.1776.

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