Faculty/Staff News
Gus Aguirre, VMD, PhD, received the American Veterinary Medical Association Lifetime Excellence in Research Award for more than four decades of research on degenerative retinal diseases affecting both dogs and humans.

Gus Aguirre, VMD, PhD, Urs Giger, DVM, PD, and Paula Henthorn, PhD, gave presentations on the molecular, genetic, and therapeutic advancements of canine retinal diseases, feline porphyria, and canine cystinuria at the 7th International Canine and Feline Genome and Hereditary Disease Conference in Boston, MA.

Gary Althouse, DVM, PhD, was elected President of the American College of Theriogenologists for 2013-14.

Raymond Boston, PhD, the first Penn Vet Chief of Biostatistics and a Penn Vet Professor of Applied Biomathematics, retired in 2013 after 22 years at Penn. Dr. Boston is well-known for his invention of computer models that have proven key to medical advances, especially in diabetes research.

The treatment of the first baby with ectodermal dysplasia was made possible by the work of Margret Casal, DVM, PhD.

Jamie DeFazio, CVT, VTS-EVN, spoke at the American Veterinary Medical Association conference.

Giacomo Gianotti, DVM, DVSc, is now a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Anesthesia and Analgesia.

Michael Goldschmidt, BVMS, was an invited participant on the Comparative Melanoma Tumor Board, sponsored by NIH to bring together expert human and veterinary pathologists to compare and contrast the histologic features and pathobiology of mucosal melanomas in humans and in dogs, and to assess the utility of dogs as a spontaneous preclinical model for piloting therapeutic investigations.

Karen Gries, CVT, graduated from St. Joseph's University with an MBA in Pharmaceutical & Healthcare Marketing.

F. Claire Hankenson, DVM, received the Total MRO “Veterinarian of the Year” Award from the Delaware Valley branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science for outstanding accomplishments in the field of laboratory animal science and contributions in education, training, and animal care. Dr. Hankenson was also elected Vice President of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine. In addition, her textbook, Critical Care Management for Laboratory Mice and Rats, was published.

David Holt, BVSc, and Jeffrey Runge, DVM, participated in a panel discussion at the American College of Veterinary Surgeons in San Antonio, TX, on the translational aspects of veterinary and human gastrointestinal surgery.

Meryl Littman, VMD, gave a presentation about “PLN-associated variant alleles in Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers” for the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Association of Canada at the National Specialty Dog Show in Calgary, Alberta. She also gave a presentation about “PLN-associated variant alleles in Airedales” for the Airedale Club of America during the Montgomery County Kennel Club All-Terrier Show.

Dan Morris, DVM, spoke at the Southern European Veterinary Conference in Barcelona, Spain.

Cindy Otto, DVM, PhD, gave the keynote address at the German Shepherd Dog Club of America Centennial, delivered a presentation at the International Working Dog Conference, and presented first aid courses in Dayton, OH and Philadelphia, PA.

Alexander Reiter, Dipl. Tzt., gave an advanced course on oral and maxillofacial surgical techniques in small animals for the German Society of Veterinary Dentistry and Oral Surgery in Stuttgart, Germany. He then gave a lecture on jaw fracture repair in cats and dogs for the veterinary surgery faculty and staff of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. Dr. Reiter also lectured and was a wet lab instructor at the Veterinary Dental Forum in New Orleans, LA.
Jeffrey Runge, DVM, lectured and was a laboratory instructor at the University of Georgia Advanced Minimally Invasive Course.

Patricia Sertich, VMD, gave two presentations at the Society for Theriogenology’s Annual Meeting in Lexington, KY.

Deborah Silverstein, DVM, lectured and was a laboratory instructor at the International Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care 2013 Symposium in San Diego, CA.

Meg Sleeper, VMD, spoke at Emory University about cardiovascular disease in non-human primates and heart disease in chimpanzees.

Billy Smith, DVM, spoke at the 18th Annual American Board of Veterinary Practitioners Symposium, covering topics including “The Transition Cow,” “Mycoplasma in Dairy Cattle,” and “Lameness in Dairy Cattle.”

Gary Smith, DPhil, presented a poster at the 4th Epidemics Conference in Amsterdam on “Estimating reductions in the lifetime risk of schizophrenia caused by reductions in the prevalence of human Toxoplasma gondii infections.” Dr. Smith also gave a talk to the Counter-Terrorism, Socio-Cultural Analysis, and the Force Health Protection divisions of U.S. Africa Command in Stuttgart, Germany on “Agroterrorism: the changing context and the crystal-ball problem.”

Lawrence Soma, VMD, retired in 2013 after more than 50 years at Penn Vet. Dr. Soma was instrumental in establishing anesthesia as a specialty discipline within clinical veterinary medicine. His extensive research in forensic pharmacology was key in the development of effective drug testing regulations for racehorses.

Corinne Sweeney, DVM, was re-appointed to the PA Racing Commission.

Charles Vite, DVM, PhD, spoke at the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science in Baltimore, MD on gene therapy of the dog and cat brain.

Stephen Cole, V’15, received the Western Veterinary Conference’s Dr. Jack Walther Leadership Award, which recognizes veterinary student leaders and promotes lifelong professional service.

Kate Huebner, V’15, received the Amstutz Scholarship through the American Association of Bovine Practitioners.

Ana Malone Oliver, V’15, was awarded second place in the Student Case Study Competition at the Society for Theriogenology’s Annual Meeting for her talk titled “Single Mummified Fetus in a Mare.”

Divya Ramnath, V’16, received the inaugural Schad Prize in Parasitology. The award, named for late Dr. Gerry Schad, a beloved Penn Vet Professor of Parasitology, is given to the student with the highest numerical average in the Parasitology core.

Nikki Wright, V’14, received the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association’s Public Service Award of Merit for her work with Pou Sante: Amar Haiti. The award is presented to a member of the PVMA for an outstanding act or achievement of public service. Ms. Wright also completed the CDC-Hubert Global Health Fellowship, designed to encourage medical and veterinary students to gain a global perspective of public health through an experiential learning opportunity.