



Spring 2015

How a Simple Alumni Mapping Project Provides a Whole New Perspective

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Recommended Citation

McMullen, Kristen (2015) "How a Simple Alumni Mapping Project Provides a Whole New Perspective," *Bellwether Magazine*: Vol. 1 : No. 83 , Article 25.

Available at: <https://repository.upenn.edu/bellwether/vol1/iss83/25>

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How a Simple Alumni Mapping Project Provides a Whole New Perspective

By Kristen McMullen

I am writing this article on a flight high over the snow-covered Rockies, as I depart Salt Lake City after a terrific night at our American Association of Equine Practitioners alumni reception. We had a great evening, seeing over 70 of our alumni, as well as former residents and interns. The volume in the room was at a high decibel as old friends reconnected and guests discussed various cases and patients.

As we greeted each alum who checked in at our registration table filled with Penn Vet goodies and information, I took note of the nametags listing city and state. There is nothing like one of these trips to gain perspective on the vast reach of Penn Vet's alumni base across the country, and even around the world.

At the beginning of my tenure as your Alumni Director, we took on a simple project of creating a visual map of where our alumni are located. These maps had legs I didn't expect! Soon, the Dean was using them in her presentations and our governmental affairs office was including them in legislator packets.

Worldwide, our alumni span the globe from South Africa to Australia and Mongolia to the United Kingdom. Penn Vet alumni can be found in all 50 states, from New Hampshire to Hawaii and Alabama to Alaska, as well as Puerto Rico and Guam.

For those of you living at a distance from Penn, who may think you are too far away to get involved—take note. **We have worked to develop three tiers of involvement: in person on campus, virtually from anywhere in the world, and opportunities where we bring Penn Vet to you** at NAVC, AVMA, AAEP, and PVMA locations around the country. Alumni around the world can serve as Career Coaches for current students or as Alumni Ambassadors for their city or town. They can serve on their Class Agent team, benefit from resources through our Speakers Bureau, and much more.



On the local level, we have alumni in all Pennsylvania counties except for two. The map of our Pennsylvania alumni comes into play when we visit with local legislators to showcase the influence of veterinary medicine in the Commonwealth and, hence, why their support is so vital. Our local alumni in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, and surrounding states can participate in face-to-face workshops with students; take part in new student orientation and the 4th Year Sendoff Celebration; join our local Speakers Bureau; attend the SCAVMA Auction, and more. We look forward to sharing your stories in greater depth—not only where you are, but what you are doing.

And, no matter where you are in the world, we hope you will make the trip back to the Philadelphia and New Bolton Center campuses for **Alumni Weekend on May 15-17, 2015, when classes ending in a “5” or a “0” will celebrate reunions**. Also, as you travel to your professional conferences at NAVC, AVMA, AAEP, and PVMA, please be sure to join us at our alumni receptions for food, drink, giveaways, school updates, and to reconnect with classmates and faculty members.

No matter where you find yourself on our alumni map, we hope you will stay in touch and get involved in person or virtually. **Learn more under the Get Involved tab on the Alumni pages at www.vet.upenn.edu.**