

Vernon and Shirley Hill Announce \$1 Million Scholarship Fund for VMD-MBA Training at Penn Vet and the Wharton School

By Ashley Berke

With a generous \$1 million gift from Vernon and Shirley Hill, Penn Vet will establish the Robert Marshak-Vernon Hill Scholarship Fund in collaboration with the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. The fund will support the training of leaders and entrepreneurs with the vision to advance both the science and business of food animal production, in order to help ensure global food security.

The scholarships will support qualified individuals in the Penn Vet community who will pursue the combined VMD-MBA degree at Penn Vet's Center for Animal Health and Productivity and the Wharton School. Marshak-Hill scholars will be required to develop projects that explore the applications of economic and business principles to the health and productivity of livestock industries.

Vernon Hill, a 1967 undergraduate alumnus of the Wharton School, and his wife Shirley are longtime supporters of Penn Vet. They named the scholarship in honor of Dr. Robert Marshak, Penn Vet Dean from 1973 to 1987. Marshak's passion for research and teaching in animal health and production has provided a springboard for Penn Vet students to impact world health and global food security.

"Dr. Marshak transformed veterinary medicine, and we are pleased to partner with him as Penn Vet and the Wharton School take the next big step," said Hill.

The Hills' generosity to Penn Vet has also included a gift of \$10 million in support of the Vernon and Shirley Hill Pavilion, a teaching and research center that opened

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in 2006, and the establishment of the Penn Vet World Awards in 2007, an innovative program that encouraged and rewarded visionary thinking and groundbreaking accomplishments in veterinary medicine.

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VERNON AND SHIRLEY HILL PAVILION

(From left) Wharton Dean Geoffrey Garrett, Shirley Hill, Vernon Hill, Dr. Robert Marshak, Margo Marshak, and Penn Vet Dean Joan Hendricks

Marshak. “It is our hope and expectation that the VMD-MBA combined-degree program, coupled with mentoring by superb faculty at the Center for Animal Health and Productivity at Penn Vet’s New Bolton Center, will inspire graduates to seek careers in food safety and security in the global landscape.”

The integrated training will emphasize innovative solutions to the complex business, health, environmental, and societal challenges associated with intensive and small-scale livestock and poultry production in a global environment, with a rapidly increasing demand for animal-sourced protein. Qualified individuals will benefit from the joint curriculum at two of the nation’s top educational institutions, where they will gain experience in veterinary medicine and business platforms on leadership, economics, finance, competitive strategy, and marketing.

Those completing the multi-year program will obtain their veterinary and MBA degrees and a certificate in Food Animal Production Medicine. Marshak-Hill graduates will have unique qualifications for leadership roles in food animal agribusiness, government, non-governmental organizations, public health, research, and academia.

“At Penn Vet, we benefit from our close proximity to other renowned schools on the University of Pennsylvania campus,” said Penn Vet Dean Joan Hendricks. “We are incredibly grateful to Vernon and Shirley Hill for making this unique interchange of knowledge possible, and for helping us ensure that veterinarians have an important voice in issues of global significance.”

“The value of a Wharton education lies not just in the traditional foundations of business, but in how we apply those principles to other disciplines,” said Geoffrey Garrett, Dean, Reliance Professor of Management and Private Enterprise, and Professor of Management at the Wharton School. “These applications directly impact the critical issues that face our nation and world. With this gift, Vernon and Shirley Hill demonstrate their understanding of how Penn is uniquely suited to address these concerns.”

The combined VMD-MBA degree program at Penn Vet and the Wharton School was established in 1981. Dr. David Galligan, VMD, MBA, Professor of Animal Health Economics and Director of the Center for Animal Health and Productivity at New Bolton Center, will oversee the updated program and will mentor the Marshak-Hill scholars.