

Alumni Legacy is an Opportunity for a Student

BY COREEN HAGGERTY

Alison Weltner, V'12 initially took a different career path than her father who was a veterinarian. But after working for several years in the pharmaceutical industry, Alison craved the veterinary experience of her father's work in small-animal practice.

"I grew up watching my dad care for both animals and the people who love them," she said. "As I advanced in my pharmaceutical career, I discovered that my true desire was to work on the front line of medicine, treating and caring for individual pets."

As a non-traditional student, Alison sought an opportunity for mentorship upon entering veterinary school at Penn, which drew her to applying for the School's Opportunity Scholarship Program.

"Mentorship through the Opportunity Scholarship award would fill many of my knowledge gaps regarding small animal practice and allow me access to the life-knowledge of a practicing clinician," she said.

St. George Hunt, V'86 had also been a non-traditional student, having worked for several years after college graduation as a counselor to children and adults with disabilities. Upon graduating from veterinary school, St. George owned a small animal practice where his love for his clients and their pets was rivaled only by his love for veterinary students and his family, which included his life-mate and companion, Suzi Robinovitz.

After St. George's untimely death in 2008, friends, family and clients wanted to immortalize the verve and dedication to the profession that he loved. Through various gifts ranging from \$25 to \$500 from



Suzi Robinovitz and St. George Hunt, V'86



Alison Weltner with mentor Dr. Carla Chieffo, V'86.

more than 100 people, enough money was raised to support a \$12,000 Opportunity Scholarship for a Penn Veterinary Medicine Student. Dear friend and classmate of St. George, **Carla Chieffo, V'86**, agreed to provide mentorship for the scholarship in St. George's name.

Today, Alison is benefitting from that scholarship through mentoring and tuition support.

"The Opportunity Scholarship is unique in that it fosters a meaningful, long-term mentorship that begins early in a student's education and continues throughout the four years of veterinary school," said Alison. "Dr. Chieffo's keen understanding of my current position in my career and my inspirational connection to Suzi have broadened my exposure to veterinary practice and reconnected me to why I changed my life's work. I never had the honor to meet St. George, but it is through his inspiration that I am pursuing my own personal dream."

Established in 1998, the mission of the Opportunity Scholarship Program at Penn Vet is to foster scholarship support and mentoring opportunities for future veterinarians trained at Penn. Through a \$12,000 scholarship disbursed across four years, sponsors may honor a friend, relative or a family name, while simultaneously investing in the future of the School and the profession.

For more information, contact Coreen Haggerty, director of Alumni Relations, at 215.898.1481. ♣