

**Georgia Poultry Federation
7-21-2022**

Hi everyone....it is such a pleasure to be with you today! Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you about what's happening in UGA's College of Veterinary Medicine.

First, many of you may be aware that our Department Head of Population Health, Mark Jackwood, will be retiring at the end of September. Though we are happy for Mark, he leaves big shoes to fill, and we will be truly sad to see him go. However, we are pleased to announce Dr. Roy Berghaus has agreed to serve as our interim Department Head, while the search committee works to identify candidates to replace this important role. Dr. Berghaus is a professor in the Food Animal Health and Management Program in the Department of Population Health. He is diplomate American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, specializing in epidemiology, and has served on numerous college and university committees and as head of our field services section.

We are also in the final stages of our search for our new Head of the Department of Large Animal Medicine. Dr. Kira Epstein has been serving as the interim head of the department since the former head, Andy Parks, moved over to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs position. Kira has been doing a great job in this role, and I've been grateful for her counsel and leadership.

And wrapping up the staffing news, we are extremely proud to announce Dr. Staci Cannon has joined us to lead our Shelter Medicine Program. Dr. Cannon will be embedded in the Athens Humane Society to teach our students shelter medicine. Dr. Cannon is board certified by the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine and the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. We are extremely excited

to welcome her on board and will be hiring another veterinarian and veterinary technician to join her at the shelter. What a great opportunity for our students to get more ‘hands on’ surgical, shelter medicine and primary care experience.

And we’re not just building our staff, we are improving our facilities as well. This includes upgrading our lobby and our large animal physical diagnosis space. Also, with help from the provost and president, we will convert the anatomy lab breezeway to study spaces, and expand the Veterinary Teaching Lab and Reading Room on the Classic Campus to accommodate our increased class size. The new Haul-In facility in Tifton is up and running and our new anatomy lab is fully functioning, safe and accommodates our full class of 150 students while keeping them engaged and united through technology. And, it may surprise you, since our hospital is only 7 years old, but we’re already adding new offices, parking lots and kennel space to accommodate our growth.

In fact, growth seems to be our theme these days, as we’ve grown our class size from 114 to 150 exceptional veterinary students, almost doubled our graduate program to approximately 340 students and now have three new undergraduate programs, including a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Physiology...our first undergraduate major, a Minor in Biomedical Physiology and an Undergraduate Certificate in One Health. We think these programs will be widely popular and great preparation for students seeking a career in medicine or science.

With all that said, our most impressive growth may be that of our research program. The College has set astounding new records in research in the past few years to bring our total research funds for FY22 to \$65 million, which includes the impressive work being done by our own Dr. Anumantha Kanthasamy, the Johnny Isakson Endowed Chair, as he works to build Georgia’s new Center for Research in Brain

Sciences and Neurodegenerative Diseases. In fact, we are proud to say that we 2nd among US colleges of veterinary medicine for research funding....and after the dust settles on the FY numbers may even be number 1.

It is this dedication to research that will keep us prepared for what might come. While we had hoped the worst of COVID-19 was behind us, recent case counts and transmission data remind us that COVID isn't done with us yet. And if needed, our College and Diagnostic Laboratories will once again step up to serve our communities with testing and infectious disease expertise as we did before. However, it is our researchers, who might be able to stop COVID-19 in its tracks. One such researcher is Dr. Biao He, the Fred C. Davison Distinguished Chair, who successfully shifted his studies with kennel cough from dogs to humans and back to animals to develop an intranasal COVID-19 vaccine based on the kennel cough vaccine, which can be used in both humans and animals. Perhaps, one day soon, your COVID-19 booster will be less painful thanks to the great work of Dr. He and his colleagues.

Though UGA CVM's biomedical research has grown substantially, please rest assured that our roots in agriculture run deep and strong. We are proud to be an active partner with the poultry industry with our internationally recognized Poultry Diagnostic Research Center, which has supported the world's poultry industries since its inception in the 1950s by providing high-quality diagnostic and clinical services to poultry producers across the globe. Our research scientists are devoted to working with you to solve problems related to anything from avian health and food safety to uncovering the biological mechanisms enabling microbes to thrive in the host and cause disease. As you know, we have been successful in developing vaccines for several major poultry diseases and new methods for diagnosing and characterizing emerging poultry pathogens, and with the threat of

foreign animal diseases at a constant high, we certainly don't plan to stop.

In short, the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine is here to serve you and Georgia. We are on an upward trajectory and have great plans for the future of our College across all of our missions. I look forward to future meetings when there will be even more to share with you!

Thank you all again for your time today, and if you have any questions for me, please feel free to ask.