Dear VMAA at ISU Members and Potential Members,

I am sure that you are very busy with all that comes with the spring season – heartworm testing, vaccinations, new pets, babies being born from all species. The list goes on. I know that after a long winter, the spring season is always welcome in the veterinary business. The VMAA is also getting busy. Please take a few minutes to read what we have been up to.

In February, I attended the IVMA Winter Conference to share information about the VMAA with the attendees. I hope that my comments raised awareness of the VMAA so that you will consider joining. In March, I attended the AASV Annual Meeting where an organizational psychologist shared “Shift Happens – Embrace the Change, Lead the Way”. We should learn from the successes of other groups and incorporate these strategies to strengthen our own organization. My take-home message was that the strength of an organization comes from people. Success can be defined as meeting the goals and expectations of the membership. This is also known as “VALUE”. Please consider becoming a member and supporting the VMAA and help “lead the way”. Let me share a few things the VMAA is currently involved in.

“DID YOU KNOW” that one of the missions of the VMAA is to “advance and strengthen interaction between alumni and veterinary students”. Here is a brief update regarding the Student Alumni Connection (SAC). SAC membership continues to grow and the VMAA is looking for additional ways to build a stronger relationship between alumni and the students.

The students, with the support of the CVM and a SAVMA grant, are taking the initiative to create a Wellness Room at the CVM. This is a study-free room designed to promote student wellness. Your membership dues allow the VMAA to support these types of programs. Individual donations can also be directed toward the Revolution Wellness Room.

In an effort to “brand” the VMAA at ISU, we need a new logo for use on letterhead and apparel to increase visibility of the organization. Since veterinarians are very creative, we want to include you in a design contest. Now is the time to start designing a logo that reflects the fellowship of the alumni of the ISU CVM and the profession as a whole. The logo should also include the name Veterinary Medical Alumni Association at Iowa State University. If your design includes any elements that might be trademarks of Iowa State University, go to <https://www.trademark.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/imported/policy/tm_internal.pdf> and review university guidelines that must be followed. Please submit your entries to vmaaisu@iastate.edu before May 31, 2019. The VMAA board will select a winner from acceptable entries by July 15, 2019. The winning designer will receive their choice of a polo or sweatshirt. Contact Marta Burkgren at the above email address if you have additional questions.

The VMAA is currently taking nominations for the VMAA Outstanding Service Award. The award is given to an individual or individuals who have provided exceptional service to the Veterinary Medical Alumni Association and/or the alumni of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Nominations are due by May 1st and can be sent to vmaaisu@iastate.edu. Please visit our web page for more information about the Outstanding Service Awards and take time to nominate a deserving recipient.

One final item: While at the AASV meeting, I received a phone call from the Dean’s Office that Dean Grooms wanted to speak with me (I felt a bit like I was being called in to see the Principal in Junior High!). Dean Grooms took the time to reach out and share his thoughts and visions about how the CVM and VMAA can continue to work together to bring value to all involved. What did I just say about what brings strength to an organization? PEOPLE. Thank you Dean Grooms for your time!

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to read the VMAA Newsletter. And remember; go to <https://vetmed.iastate.edu/alumni-giving/alumni/association> to learn more about the VMAA at ISU! Go Cyclones!

Mark Brinkman, DVM

President, VMAA at Iowa State University.