Dear VMAA at ISU Members and Potential Members,

THE BEST IS YET TO COME!!!

The gavel has been passed and I’m writing this newsletter as the VMAA Past President rather than acting president (procrastination is one of my strengths!). In the future, be sure to watch for exciting news about the VMAA from our new president, Dr. Rachel Allbaugh. Dr. Jenni Stumpf has also joined the VMAA board and brings to us an immense amount of enthusiasm and good ideas that we hope to implement to help reach even more ISU veterinary graduates from all classes.

I would like to share with you three things I learned while having the opportunity to serve on the VMAA at ISU board during the past several years. First, if you look back to the initial newsletter that I wrote, I mentioned that the VMAA seemed like the best kept secret since sliced bread. However, during the past year we have continued to make progress on promoting the VMAA. Our membership is now over 900 members. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! Remember, we have over 5000 potential members, so as an organization, we can do so much more. As we move into 2020 I hope every ISU veterinary graduate has 20/20 vision on how important it is to be a member of the VMAA and support our efforts. (Sorry, I couldn’t resist the 20/20 plug).

The second thing that I learned is how adaptive the VMAA can be. As a profession, I believe that veterinary medicine is one of the most adaptive and creative professions there is. There are continuous changes in disease, infectious agents, new tests and products, changing regulations and societal issues that impact the profession. The VMAA has to be able to change with the times too. During the past few years, the VMAA has supported students and alumni with both traditional and new programs. More scholarships, the Student Alumni Connection and the Speakers Bureau are just a few of the new programs for students. Traditional events such as the White Coat Ceremony, sophomore sweatshirts and the IVMA Annual Meeting Luncheon continue. 2019 saw new activities at the ISU Homecoming event. Watch for even more exciting changes for the 2020 ISU Homecoming celebration! I think it is great that the VMAA, College of Veterinary Medicine and the IVMA have joined forces to make the ISU Homecoming Celebration extra special for returning ISU vet alumni.

And lastly, I learned that the VMAA works very hard to reach out and stay connected with all ISU veterinary alumni. The VMAA board comes together 4-5 times per year to discuss and plan all the events of the year. Alumni receptions, IVMA Annual Meeting Luncheon, Gentle Doctor publication, ISU Homecoming Celebration, Stange/Switzer Awards, Outstanding Service Award, Student Awards, Sophomore sweatshirts, White Coat Ceremony, SAVMA Auxiliary, a speakers bureau and several Student Alumni Connection programs and more are all fully or partly funded and supported by YOUR participation and membership in YOUR VMAA. I would say that our VMAA members get a pretty good return from an annual $50 membership investment.

So as we move into 2020, I challenge each of you, as ISU Veterinary Alumni, to get involved and support the VMAA at ISU. Take advantage of some of the “perks” such as discounted Homecoming football tickets, opportunities to stay connected both socially and professionally within the VMAA, and most importantly to support the student and member programs that keep our veterinary profession strong! Be sure to watch for new information from Dr. Allbaugh, the ISU CVM Web pages and maybe even a new Facebook page for more news and information! Go Cyclones! If you haven’t joined yet, the 2020 membership form can be found at https://vetmed.iastate.edu/alumni-giving/alumni/association

Dr. Mark Brinkman, PAST President of the Veterinary Medical Alumni Association at ISU