



Florida Tomorrow

College of  
Veterinary Medicine



**UF** | FLORIDA  
TOMORROW  
THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



## From the Dean

In an ideal world, every animal disease would have a cure; every pet would have a loving home; and the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine would be a place where medical discoveries happen every day to solve animal, human and environmental health problems.

At our college, we live and work according to these beliefs and hopes. Our framework for achieving those goals is in place. To make a difference in the lives of every pet owner — as well as in human and environmental health — we must simultaneously maintain the incredible institution we already have and strengthen existing programs with the help of your financial gifts.

Our goals for the *Florida Tomorrow* campaign are not extravagant. We have faculty and staff who are poised for the challenge. And our stakeholders — including clients such as Florida's agriculture, equine and public health constituencies, and donors and other friends of the college — are ready to make change happen. We have teamed with colleagues across the UF campus to make still greater progress in the diagnosis and treatment of emerging diseases, such as West Nile virus.

Already we offer our students fresh approaches to address the related problems of stray animals and unwanted pets in our community through our shelter medicine and Operation Catnip programs. We hope to enhance student learning opportunities with a new simulation resource laboratory that would supplement what we are already doing to reduce reliance on animals in teaching. Our long-established wildlife and zoo medicine program is one of the best in the country. We plan to take what's already available and strengthen the program by expanding our efforts in aquatic animal health.

We depend on your support to help reach those goals in these and other key areas, including equine soundness and veterinary oncology. Please help us reach *Florida Tomorrow*, today.

Sincerely,

Glen Hoffsis

Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

# Florida Tomorrow

## ... and the College of Veterinary Medicine

### The Promise of Tomorrow

What is *Florida Tomorrow*? Here at the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine, we believe it's an opportunity, one filled with promise and hope. It's that belief that feeds the university's capital campaign to raise more than \$1 billion.

The *Florida Tomorrow* campaign will shape the university, certainly. But its ripple effect will also touch the state of Florida, the nation and the entire world. *Florida Tomorrow* is pioneering research and spirited academic programs. It's a fertile environment for inquiry, teaching and learning. It's being at the forefront to address the challenges facing all of us, both today and tomorrow.

What is *Florida Tomorrow*? At the College of Veterinary Medicine, it's our pledge to support the community, faculty, students and animals. It's our commitment to care for animals, here on campus and throughout the state of Florida and the Southeast United States. And it's our promise to future generations to foster tomorrow's next great veterinarians.

### UF College of Veterinary Medicine

#### *Florida Tomorrow Campaign Goals*

Faculty Support \$16 million

Graduate Student Support \$3 million

Programs & Research \$6 million

Campus Enhancements \$15 million

**TOTAL \$40 million**





# Florida Tomorrow is a place ...

where medical discoveries solve animal, human and environmental problems.

## Horse Doctor

When the West Nile virus broke out among horses nationwide, the scene, says veterinarian Maureen Long, was “devastating.”

Long, an equine infectious disease specialist at the University of Florida, had seen West Nile arrive in Florida in 2001. The following year, some 14,000 cases emerged across the country. Its effects were traumatic to horses and their owners.

“When a horse is sick and neurologically disabled and can’t keep its balance, it’s not only devastating for the horse, it’s dangerous for everyone around the horse,” Long says. “Calls were coming in from all over the country from practitioners who were horrified by what they were seeing.”

Not only were the effects of the virus staggering, but its spread came right on the heels of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists’ attacks and the anthrax scare.

“Everyone was traumatized,” Long says. “There was hysteria among horse owners.”

As the disease spread, Long put her research on other diseases aside and became the de facto national expert on West Nile in horses, touring the country to help practitioners prepare for what they would face. She developed standards to test the effectiveness of a vaccine to prevent the disease, and is currently studying how the mosquito-borne virus is spread.

“We don’t yet know what species is spreading the virus. Finding that out will help focus mosquito-control efforts,” she says.

Her research will also help horse owners protect animals from Eastern equine encephalitis, which is also mosquito-borne. Animals that have been vaccinated for EEE are sometimes still susceptible to the disease, which makes proper management of animals in pastures important to their survival. Better protection will not only safeguard beloved animals, but also the horse industry, Long notes.

“Florida is producing some of the best thoroughbreds in the country, and there’s a huge quarter horse industry here. Future Kentucky Derby winners are coming out of here,” she says. “We’re trying to determine which kinds of management practices really have an effect on protecting horses.”

Long says that although working with emerging pathogens has “an incredibly steep learning curve” she’s glad to have the chance to make a global impact on equine health. And the data she uncovers may play a role in protecting humans from encephalitis, as well.

“Horses are the only other species that consistently gets the disease from these viruses,” she says. “Finding out more about it is important for human disease, too.”

Dr. Maureen Long is an expert on the West Nile virus in horses.



Pepper, a 9-year-old police dog with the McIntosh County Sheriff's Office in Georgia, was treated at UF after being injured in an automobile accident.





# Florida Tomorrow is a day ...

when every animal disease has a cure.

## Dog's Best Friend

The plea for help went out during the holiday season: A 9-year-old police dog and the officer who handled him had been injured in a high-speed chase on Interstate 95. The officer was in intensive care, and the dog, a black Labrador named Pepper, needed major surgery.

The small Georgia police department knew it was likely beyond its budget to pay for Pepper's diagnosis and treatment right away, if ever. Of all of the university veterinary hospitals in the Southeast the McIntosh County Sheriff's Office contacted, only the University of Florida answered the call.

"Florida was the only one who contacted us back," McIntosh County's canine supervisor Ty Poppell says. "I can't even describe how great it felt to have someone say, 'Yes, we can do it.'"

"It would have been hard to turn them down," says UF's Dr. Roger Clemmons, who operated on Pepper. "Not only was it Christmas, but I have a real soft spot for dogs who work for a living. They're doing a good job for us, so we have to take care of them, too."

When Pepper arrived at UF, he couldn't stand or walk because of two herniated discs he suffered in the crash. Although he had been in pain for more than a week since the accident, Pepper's winning attitude remained intact.

Clemmons performed the surgery to repair the disc protrusion on Christmas Eve, bringing Pepper home with him to recover.

"I shared my turkey dinner with him; he liked that," Clemmons says.

Three days later, Pepper was walking once more and ready to go back to Georgia. In fact, the surgery restored Pepper's movement so well, he has since gone back to work in McIntosh County, sniffing out illegal drugs. After the story made news in Florida and Georgia, an anonymous donor stepped forward to cover Pepper's medical bills.

"Pepper is just one of those dogs who, as soon as they come up to you, they're your buddy," Clemmons says. "He had this attitude like, 'If you help me, I'll do everything I can to get well.'"

And although he was headed for Georgia Bulldog territory when he left UF, Pepper went home wearing a Gator T-shirt.

"I have the highest praise for the University of Florida," Poppell says now. "It changed me from a Bulldog fan to a Gator fan. That's not easy around here, but I'm holding my ground."



# Florida Tomorrow is a belief ... that every pet deserves a loving home.

## Pets in Need

Bones, a cat named for his skeletal appearance, needed a new name. Following surgery and weeks of care in the University of Florida's shelter medicine program, he was entirely too sleek, healthy and happy for his original moniker, so student Cassie Quest adopted him and renamed him Charlie.

Charlie had been one of 20 cats taken to the Alachua County Animal Shelter from a home being investigated for animal cruelty. Worse than his emaciated appearance was his internal damage. After being hit by a car, his internal organs had shifted from his abdomen to his chest cavity, giving him little room to breathe. UF's team of shelter medicine students, led by Dr. Natalie Isaza, operated to repair the damage.

Charlie's recovery is just one of many success stories that cover the bulletin boards at the shelter, where vet students gain hands-on surgical experience while helping homeless pets.

"It can be shocking. Students see things you wouldn't encounter in a nice practice where people take care of their pets," Isaza says. "It really opens their eyes ... They take the rotation for the surgery experience, but they leave with a lot more."

Through work in shelter medicine, students come to understand the importance of controlling pet overpopulation.

"They may learn about overpopulation in school, but here they see it firsthand. It really drives it home," Isaza says. "Even if they

don't want to go into shelter medicine, they can still educate their clients about the importance of spaying and neutering their pets, or they can volunteer their time with a spay/neuter organization."

Another program working to curtail overpopulation is Dr. Julie Levy's Operation Catnip, which spays and neuters feral cats. Levy has gained national attention for the volunteer-powered program, which she brought to UF in 1998. Operation Catnip has since sterilized more than 20,000 strays. The effort not only reduces the suffering of these homeless animals, but addresses the impact of feral cats on public health and the environment.

The benefits of both programs reach far beyond Gainesville. Students are carrying the lessons they've learned throughout the country to help reduce the numbers of homeless animals.

"Several students who have graduated and started their careers have called to ask how to start spay/neuter operations in their communities," Levy says. "It's important that they see they can make a dent in the problem. Without vets playing that critical role, the problem of homeless animals will never be solved."



Charlie, a cat rescued from an abusive home, is examined at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine.



## Our Vision of Tomorrow

The University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine, the state's only veterinary college, is actively engaged in seeking new ways to further its mission of advancing animal, human and environmental health.

In the process of envisioning our future, anchored by our goals for the *Florida Tomorrow* campaign, we have outlined several key areas in which our college and Veterinary Medical Center already have major strengths that could be fortified and taken to the next level through additional financial support.

With a new simulation resource teaching laboratory, we hope to offer

additional creative learning opportunities to veterinary students. Professional training that makes use of simulators which imitate real-life situations and reduce reliance on animals has become a way of life in veterinary education. We plan to supplement what our veterinary students are already doing in this area through the use of such innovative tools as the Human Patient Simulator developed as a teaching tool by UF physicians.

Equine soundness is an area that has received perhaps unprecedented attention recently through the events surrounding the traumatic injuries to Kentucky Derby winner Barbaro, and his subse-

quent death by euthanasia. Positioned so closely to Ocala, one of the world's largest training and breeding centers for performance horses, our equine facilities are poised to provide even better care and treatment for injuries to the equine athlete. Equine soundness is a basic and critical component of Florida's thriving and economically important horse industry.

Aquatic animal and wildlife health is a highly visible and environmentally important area of focus for our college. From Florida's aquaculture business, which is third in the nation in sales, to the preservation of threatened and endangered species such as manatees,

## We will meet our goals by

- ▶ Creating an environment for teaching, learning and patient care
- ▶ Building a world-class faculty through endowed professorships
- ▶ Strengthening scholarship and fellowship opportunities
- ▶ Creating new research opportunities in the areas of emerging pathogens and infectious diseases, as well as Florida's environmental health



sea turtles and Florida right whales, our aquatic animal medicine program has played an active role. Through your gifts, we hope to enhance our existing collaborations with the state's rehabilitation facilities and do still more to pinpoint emerging diseases threatening aquatic animals and Florida's environment.

The No. 1 disease seen and treated by veterinarians at our small animal hospital is cancer. As a referral center for the entire Southeast, we see many types of cancer, both common and uncommon, in our animal patients. At least one-third of the pets we see have some type of cancer, including melanoma, osteosarcoma, lymphoma,

mast cell tumors, hemangiosarcomas and soft tissue sarcomas, among others. Our campaign goals include expanding our treatment modalities to supplement chemotherapy and stereotactic radiosurgery options with radiation oncology made possible through the purchase of a linear accelerator. Our oncology program just keeps growing in leaps and bounds, and we need every tool possible to accommodate our growing clientele.

We have great hopes for the future of the UF College of Veterinary Medicine. Our overriding goal is to enhance our already distinguished reputation within the state and elsewhere by strengthening our

research, education and service mission; by encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration; by addressing the needs of Florida, the nation and the global community; and by capitalizing on our existing strengths.



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