

Vet Med News

JANUARY 2023



Former police dog Thor swallows hard for holidays, receives compassionate, life-saving care at Veterinary Teaching Hospital

It's much easier to get a cloth elf and a plush teddy bear chew toy into a dog than to get them out.

But out they came, thanks to the combined efforts of more than 20 personnel at the [Veterinary Teaching Hospital](#), within the college, just before the holiday break. Thor's care was financed by compassionate care donations through Paws of Honor and the Veterinary Teaching Hospital Working & Service Dog support fund.

Around the College



Research funding skyrockets at veterinary college in recent years

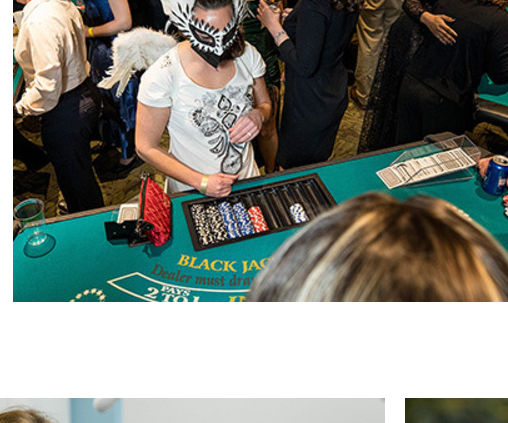
Research funding awarded to the college has tripled in a decade, with most of that growth – from roughly \$7 million to over \$18 million – occurring in the past five years.

Research funding jumped 80 percent, from \$10 million to \$18 million, between fiscal years 2021 and 2022 alone.



Trained in human medicine, four times bereaved by cancer, MaLora Bush finds purpose in treating pets

For four close family members who died of cancer, for her three furry "babies" at home, MaLora Bush has found more than just a job she loves, but a life's mission.



A night of glamor and giving back

Students at the college have revived a beloved fundraising tradition: Casino Night. The event, which took place on Jan. 21, offered food, drinks, and fun, with 20 tables of games like blackjack, roulette, and even horse racing. At the end of the night, participants traded in their poker chips for raffle tickets and vied for their chance to win a variety of gift baskets donated by corporate sponsors, local businesses, and private donors.



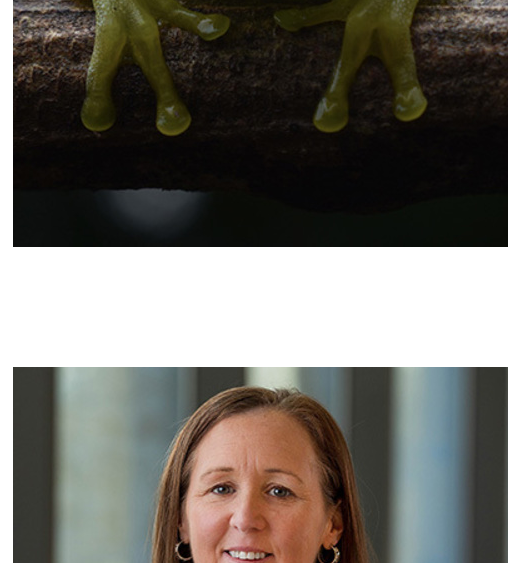
Spotlight on...

Faculty: [Brittany Ciepluch](#), DVM, MS, DACVS–SA
Clinical Assistant Professor, Surgical Oncology

Student: [Chris Hollingsworth](#)
Class of 2023, Public/Corporate Track

Alumni: [Bom Harris](#) (DVM '08)

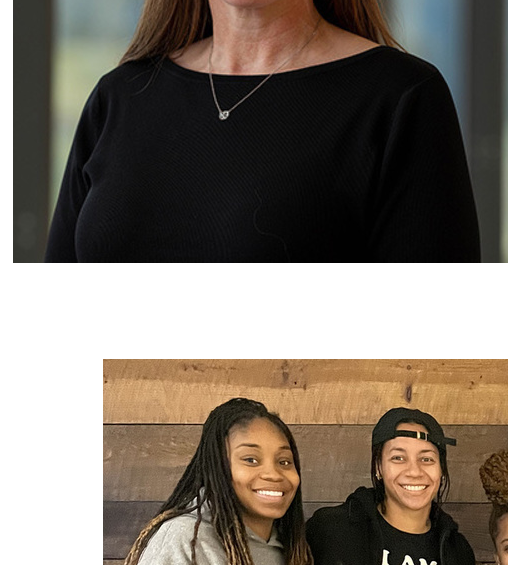
Bom Harris has been practicing in Virginia since graduating from the college in 2008. Harris hails from Birmingham, Alabama, and now resides in Beaverdam, Virginia. She is active in her community, focusing on producer and 4H education.



Veterinary student Alex Marsh arrives on campus deeply immersed in tropical rainforest research

Handling scores of tropical snakes isn't a prerequisite for entry into the college. But Alex Marsh checks that box, easily.

Marsh is a first-year veterinary student, but already has impressive credentials and experience researching wildlife in the Amazon rainforest of Peru.



New director of advising will support growing undergraduate public health program

[Katie Cross](#) has been named director of advising for the [Department of Population Health Sciences](#) at the college. This is a new position that will lead the advising team for the undergraduate public health program.



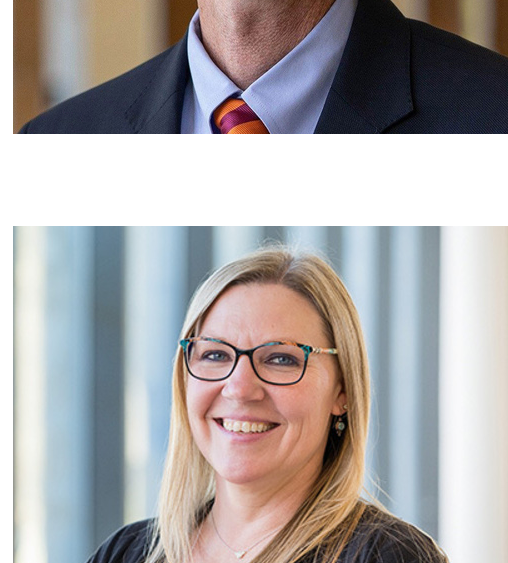
Only 1.2 percent of veterinarians are Black — this club chapter wants to change that

Students at the college have established the newest chapter of the [National Association of Black Veterinarians](#), working to provide education and promote inclusion within an overwhelmingly white field.



Chris Byron named new head of Large Animal Clinical Sciences amid equine crisis

The veterinary college has named associate professor of large animal surgery [Chris Byron](#) as the next head of the [Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences](#).



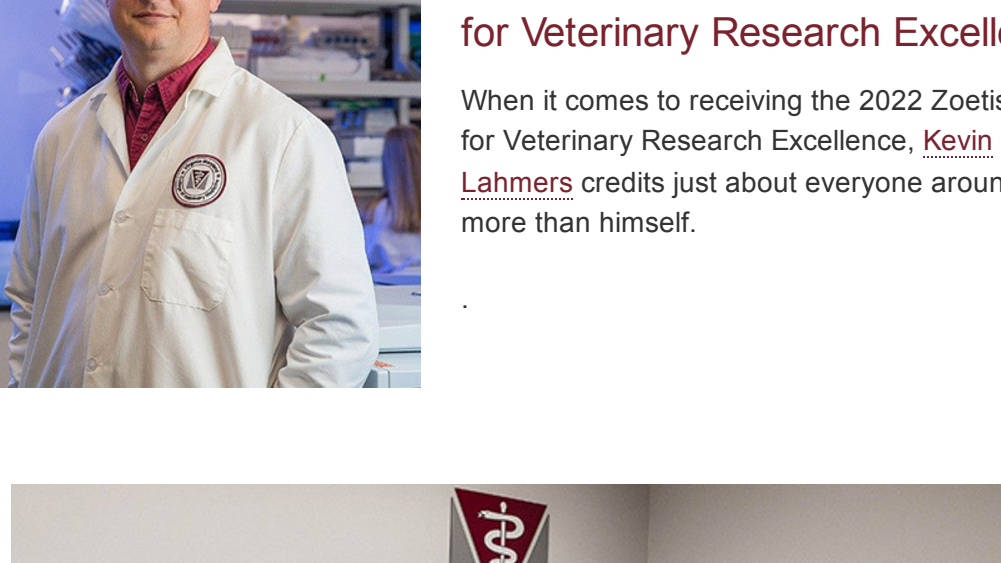
Audrey Ruple named Dorothy A. and Richard G. Metcalf Professor of Veterinary Medical Informatics

[Audrey Ruple](#), associate professor of quantitative epidemiology in the [Department of Population Health Sciences](#) in the college has been named the Dorothy A. and Richard G. Metcalf Professor of Veterinary Medical Informatics by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors.



Kevin Lahmers, leader in exotic tick disease study, wins Zoetis Award for Veterinary Research Excellence

When it comes to receiving the 2022 Zoetis Award for Veterinary Research Excellence, [Kevin Lahmers](#) credits just about everyone around him more than himself.



"This is your space": LGBTQ+ students forge community at veterinary college

LGBTQ+ students at the college have created a place for community and camaraderie — the college is now home to an official chapter of [PrideSVMC](#). [PrideSVMC](#) is the student arm of [PrideVMC](#), a national organization of LGBTQ+ veterinary professionals.

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Vet Med Alumni

[Alumni online →](#)

Five industry leaders receive USPOULTRY Lamplighter Awards

[Fidel Hegngi](#) (DVM '94) is a senior staff veterinarian and the national coordinator of the United States, Live Bird Marketing System Avian Influenza Prevention and Control Program for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services.

Rural veterinary shortage

[Amanda Weakley-Scott](#) (B.S. '10, DVM '14) talks about student loan debt and the discrepancies in income between large animal veterinarians and small animal veterinarians.

The 7 best online veterinarian services for virtual pet care

Although independent vet telehealth companies can't diagnose, treat, or, in most cases, prescribe medications for your pet, they can provide peace of mind about health issues like parasite prevention, diet, grooming, exercise, and behavioral issues, according to [Hannah Lau](#) (B.S. '13, DVM '17), a remote veterinarian at Adobe Animal Hospital in Los Altos, California.

Tending to animals on 'the whole ark'

When it comes to making veterinary drugs, only seven species get much attention: dogs, cats, horses, cattle, pigs, chickens and turkeys. [Meg Oeller](#) (DVM '89) is trying to change that.

Vet Med in the News

Black-legged tick genome deciphered

[Utpal Pal](#), professor, Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Maryland

21 Questions with Nonyé Williams

[Nonyé Williams](#), DVM Candidate 2026

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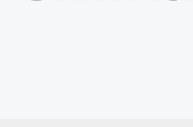
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