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ALTERNATIVES

IN VETERINARY MEDICAL EDUCATION



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Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights

Veterinary Students Making a Difference

Western University Students Launch AVAR Chapter

Group Provides Educational Materials Regarding Factory Farming of Turkeys, Collects Food for Animals of the Homeless, and Plans for Spay Day

*Heather Applegate, Western University SCAVAR President
Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine, Class of 2007*

Students at Western University of Health Sciences' new College of Veterinary Medicine in Pomona, California, are thrilled to announce the school's first Student Chapter of the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (SCAVAR). Of 85 students in the charter class, thirty have chosen to join the ranks of SCAVAR and are excited to start projects and programs that further AVAR's cause.



Heather Applegate, President of the SCAVAR at Western University, with her beloved cat, Riley.

The atmosphere at Western University makes the school the perfect place to found a SCAVAR. The unique problem-based learning curriculum and the reverence for life philosophy at this school make it the ideal location for the beginning of a strong student movement in animal advocacy. We students feel that the excitement and love of animals will be great assets to the organization.

During the Thanksgiving holiday, SCAVAR members initiated outreach activities in an effort to raise awareness about the inhumane treatment turkeys receive on their way to dinner tables each year. Students created educational posters detailing incredible recipes for people to take and use for their Turkey-free Thanksgiving dinners. They also held a Thanksgiving and Christmas food drive for the homeless and their animals in cooperation with Pomona Homeless Outreach Program.

The students at Western University also hope to bring their excitement about AVAR to other veterinary medical school campuses, urging students at other

Continued on page 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Veterinary Students Making a Difference – Western University Students Launch AVAR Chapter</i>	1
<i>AVAR to Host Exhibit Booth at SAVMA</i>	2
<i>Nearly Every Veterinary School Cited by USDA for Non-Compliance with Federal Law</i>	2
<i>Accent on an Alternative – NEAVS Report on Alternatives in Animal Research Now Available on the Web!</i>	4
<i>Alternatives Resource Available for \$2 Postage Fee</i>	5
<i>AVAR Student Chapters Link up Animal Advocates</i>	5
<i>Comparison of Alternatives Offered by Veterinary Schools</i>	6
<i>Resources Available</i>	8

animal cell lines should be the source for all cells, tissues, and organs used in research and testing.

- What needs to be done
 - Specific recommendations are made for academia, government, industry, and consumers to immediately reduce the number of animals used in research and education, as well as promote greater reliance on humane alternatives.
- Alternatives links
 - The report ends with an exhaustive list of Internet-based web sites that can be visited for additional information in the areas of basic research alternatives, testing alternatives, education alternatives, and alternatives databases (including the AVAR Alternatives Database at www.avar.org/alted_search.html).

Dr. McArdle concludes his narrative with, "There is no doubt that replacement alternatives are the future of biomedical research, testing, and education and that this can happen sooner rather than later."

Alternatives Resource Available for \$2 Postage Fee

The New England Anti-Vivisection Society (NEAVS) is offering the comprehensive alternatives resource, *From Guinea Pig to Computer Mouse*, to those involved in the veterinary profession for a nominal postage fee of \$2. This is a 544-page book which provides comprehensive information on more than 500 of the latest alternatives products within the fields of anatomy, clinical skills and surgery, critical care, physiology and pharmacology. The book also includes ten case studies written by university professors who are at the forefront of alternatives research and ends with a directory of 800 additional resources including web sites, printed material, and organizations who are producers or promoters of alternatives.

To order a copy of *From Guinea Pig to Computer Mouse*, contact NEAVS by sending an e-mail message to info@neavs.org, a letter to 333 Washington Street, Suite 850, Boston, MA 02108, or calling Anne Hall at (617) 523-6020, Ext. 13, and mention the veterinary discount (the book normally sells for \$9 plus shipping).

Veterinary Students Making A Difference

Continued from page 1

schools across the nation to help ban pound-seized animals as a resource for veterinary instruction. "Our students of the veterinary profession who are studying within the positive environment of a Reverence for Life (a philosophy coined by Dr. Albert Schweitzer, refined by Dr. Leo Bustad, and now made explicit in the CVM program) will develop into informed, intelligent, and compassionate veterinarians and animal advocates," said Dr. Lara Rasmussen, faculty advisor to SCAVAR.

Western University's student chapter's ambitious event schedule speaks to the determination we have to spread the message of animal advocacy to the rest of the campus and the surrounding Southern California community. We plan to take part in the Doris Day Animal Foundation's Spay Day USA, working



Members of SCAVAR from the charter veterinary school class of Western University.

with the local humane societies to spay and neuter dogs and cats. Another planned project includes setting up an adoption and fostering program for stray animals in the Pomona area. Numerous local companies and clinics have already donated supplies and other items to this program and are excited to participate.

AVAR Student Chapters Link up Animal Advocates

AVAR frequently hears from veterinary students who are concerned about animal rights but who don't want to address the issue on campus. They may feel intimidated by their professors, their fellow students, or just the prospect of taking on a traditionally unpopular stance while trying to get through veterinary school.

The good news is that the atmosphere on many campuses is changing, and animal welfare and animal rights issues are not the taboo topic they once were. The other good news is that veterinary students who are concerned about animal rights issues such as terminal surgeries and pound seizure don't have to keep their thoughts to themselves or try to make changes on their own.

AVAR Student Chapters bring together like-minded students to talk about these issues and work on ways to reduce the harming and killing of animals in veterinary instruction and in other areas. AVAR already has an active student chapter at Western University of Health Sciences (see article in this issue of the *Alternatives* newsletter) and a group of students at Ohio State University recently held the first meeting of their student chapter with an AVAR veterinary member in attendance. Other chapters are being planned at UC Davis and several other schools.

If you're interested in starting or being a part of a student chapter, please contact Pam Runquist at AVAR at pam@avar.org or telephone (530) 759-8106.