

OFFICE OF RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

**Summary of the 15th Annual
Meril-NIH National Veterinary Scholars Symposium
“One Health,”
July 31 - August 3, 2014,
Ithaca, New York**

Overview: Over 620 participants attended the 15th annual Merial-NIH Symposium at the Campus of Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, hosted by the College of Veterinary Medicine. More than 460 veterinary students from 45 academic institutions were represented at the symposium, including 29 veterinary colleges from the United States, three from Canada, two from the Caribbean, four from Europe, and two from Australia as well as five other research centers and universities, including NCI, NIH. Other participants included University Program Directors and representatives from the NIH, Merial, Burroughs Wellcome, the Association of American Veterinary Colleges, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Students attending the symposium included veterinary students participating in summer research programs as well as DVM/PhD students and postdoctoral veterinarians in research training programs. The symposium theme of “One Health” emphasized the impact of veterinary medicine on global sustainability as well as human and animal health and scientific discovery.

Format: The symposium lasted two full days with some preliminary activities starting on the afternoon before the symposium. These included the Office of Research Infrastructure Programs (ORIP) T35/32 Directors meeting which was held during lunch. Topics of discussion included the Division of Comparative Medicine-ORIP administrative updates and budget/funding issues related to T grants. This meeting was followed by ORIP’s sponsored Colloquium: “Present and Future Challenges Regarding the Development of Veterinarian Scientists.” Later in the evening, Dr. Nozomi Nishimura (Cornell University) delivered the state of the art talk about the use of multiphoton microscopy for studying blood flow in the brain of rodent models of neurological disease in humans.

The program for the morning of the first day included a talk about the role of veterinarians in the research and development transformation of the pharmaceutical industry. This was followed by the key note presentation given by Dr. Barbara Natterson-Horowitz (UCLA), entitled “Zoobiquity: The Astonishment Connection between Human and Animal Health.” Her presentation fit very well with the theme of the symposium. Dr. Natterson-Horowitz, an MD cardiologist, has developed interdisciplinary programs that bring together the fields of human and veterinary medicine. The morning session ended with plenary talks about sustainability and genetics. During the lunch break, attendees had the opportunity to speak to the morning speakers or participate in some selected talks (e.g., NIH loan repayment program presentation by Dr. Jill Mattia [NIH]). The afternoon sessions on sustainability or genetics topics were run simultaneously. Later in the afternoon, there were two poster sessions based on the veterinary students’ summer research experience.

The second day consisted of two plenary sessions related to cancer and infectious diseases followed by split sessions in cancer biology and infectious diseases. The lunch break followed a similar pattern as day one of the meeting. Several awards were presented during the afternoon; these included the AVMA Lifetime Excellence in Research Award given to Dr. Henry J. Baker (Auburn University) and the AVMF/AKC Career Achievement Award in Canine Research presented to Dr. Deborah Knapp (Purdue University). Late afternoon sessions included presentations by the 2014 “Young Investigator Award” finalists followed by the Merial Veterinary Scholars Award and the Veterinary Graduate Veterinary Scholar Award. The day ended with the third and final poster session.

The Burroughs Wellcome Trust had special sessions on Friday and Saturday morning for selected young, early career veterinarian investigators related to navigating the start-up negotiation process in academia, finding a place and fitting in at academic institutions, establishing oneself in a research field and building a scientific reputation.

Contact Information

For additional information related to this meeting, please contact:

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