



**National Center for
Research Resources**

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

**Summary of the 2009 National
Veterinary Scholars Symposium
August 6 – 8, 2009**

The views expressed in written conference materials or publication and by speakers and moderators at HHS-sponsored conferences do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government

Introduction

More than 450 people gathered on the North Carolina State University campus August 6 – 8 for the 2009 National Veterinary Scholars Symposium. This public-private-partnership — sponsored in part by NIH, Merck & Co., Inc. and the animal health company Merial, Ltd. — convened veterinary students from schools around the United States and Canada who are engaged in formal research training programs. The symposium was hosted by the North Carolina State University and focused on veterinary students performing research in summer programs, combined degree students, postgraduate veterinarian-scientists and more senior veterinary scientists. Attendees included more than 300 student trainees supported by NCRR's Division of Comparative Medicine institutional T35 grants or the Merck/Merial National Summer Research Program, which are mostly awarded to veterinary colleges across the country. Each student scholar performs research for 10 – 12 weeks during the summer break.

Symposium Focus

The focus this year was Translational Research: Putting Discoveries to Work in Practice, with individual keynote and plenary talks, including Lost in Translation: Are Animal Models Predictive?; Translating One Medicine; Bench-to-Patient: Bacteria and Inflammatory Bowel Disease; and Patient to Bench to Patient: Equine Genetics from Disease Discovery to Nutritional Intervention. Panel session topics included obesity, regenerative medicine, clinical studies, gastroenterology, immune-mediated/infectious diseases and dermatology.

There was a mix of large group presentations, smaller panel sessions, facility tours and poster sessions. Each scholar trainee was expected to present a poster of his or her research work. The main audience for the posters was the other trainees and mentors from different universities. More than 90 faculty mentors attended. One of the major benefits of attending this meeting is that it provides the opportunity for trainees considering a research career to meet research scientists and discuss crucial issues regarding career decisions with successful researchers and other student trainees interested in research careers.

New this year was a parallel course entitled "Becoming Faculty: A Short Course on Launching a Scientific Career," aimed at early-stage assistant professors and advanced postdoctoral appointees. Burroughs Wellcome Fund staff members taught the course, referencing the lab management manual: [Making the Right Moves](#) .

Attendees

Approximately 335 veterinary students from eight combined degree student programs and 27 summer student programs from the U.S. and Canada attended the symposium. Other attendees included university faculty, NIH scientists, Howard Hughes Medical Institute staff members, Burroughs Wellcome Fund staff members, and many scientists from Merck and Merial. The conference was made possible by support from many organizations including:

- National Institutes of Health (NCRR and NCI)
- Merck & Co., Inc.
- Merial, Ltd.
- Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
- American Veterinary Medical Association
- American Veterinary Medical Foundation
- Burroughs Wellcome Fund
- American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and Foundation
- Multiple subunits of the North Carolina State University

National Training Opportunities

For information on national training opportunities for veterinarians, please consult [Career Development Opportunities](#), [Institutional Training Awards](#), and [National and Canadian Research Opportunities for Veterinary Students](#) .

Contact Information

For additional information related to this symposium, please contact:

Raymond R. O'Neill, Ph.D.
Health Scientist Administrator
Division of Comparative Medicine
Office of Research Infrastructure Programs
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives
Office of the Director
National Institutes of Health
One Democracy Plaza, Room 952
6701 Democracy Boulevard, MSC 4874
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-4874 (20817 for express mail)
Telephone: 301-435-0749
Fax: 301-480-3819
E-mail: ONeillR@mail.nih.gov