

Dear VMAA at ISU Members and Potential Members,

One of the highlights of 2020 for me was enjoying the success of the ISU Football Team, led by Matt Campbell. Because of the efforts and commitment of the players, coaches, athletic department, university officials, the ISU VDL, and others, a plan was developed that allowed the games to be played and fans to attend. The successes of the program carried over into 2021 with a victory at the Fiesta Bowl, new contracts for coaches, a rejuvenated vision for ISU Athletics and future commitments from both returning players and new recruits. All of these events give us hope for great success for 2021 ISU Football and beyond. I share my favorite quote of the season from Coach Matt Campbell, "I think for Iowa State football, we wanted to prove that greatness isn't just for the chosen few. But greatness is for those that chose to be different and demand that they become the best versions of themselves that they can become." Such a powerful quote embodies qualities such as commitment, leadership, sacrifice and hard work.

I believe that the VMAA at ISU and our profession in general have these same qualities present within us. My goal today is to convince you that the VMAA Board of Directors is the 'leadership'. Now we need ALL ISU CVM Alumni to 'commit' and become members of the VMAA at ISU each and EVERY YEAR. Together we can all 'sacrifice' some of our time, energy (and money) and do the 'hard work' when it is needed. We have just sent out the 2<sup>nd</sup> membership renewal notice for 2021. Please take time to return your \$50 membership payment as our programs are totally funded by membership dues. Consider becoming a new member in 2021 if you have not been before. And thank you to those that have been loyal and committed to the VMAA at ISU every year. To learn more about the VMAA at ISU go to our website (<https://vetmed.iastate.edu/alumni-giving/alumni/association>).

The VMAA at ISU Board of Directors met virtually in January to conduct business and plan for the upcoming year. Since one of the primary goals of our organization is to bring colleagues, students and others in our profession together, we are hoping for more in-person meeting opportunities in 2021. We have truly missed interacting at events such as the White Coat Ceremony, ISU Homecoming, various veterinary meetings and veterinary student activities. We also examined the finances of the organization and are planning an audit to ensure that we have been good stewards for the VMAA at ISU. Feel free to contact Marta Burkgren, Association Director, if you would like more information ([vmaaisu@iastate.edu](mailto:vmaaisu@iastate.edu) or 515-233-5183).

Fortunately, with the help of technology and social media, the VMAA at ISU provided other opportunities to interact with you. Have you noticed our greater presence on Facebook? Click on "like" and follow us. Explore on Facebook to see how the VMAA at ISU is working for you! Another program that we will further develop in 2021 is the Student-Alumni Connection Speakers Bureau. There are currently 22 veterinarians that have signed up to participate. Student groups can go to the SAC Speakers Bureau to find veterinarians who are willing to share their experiences and expertise about various veterinary related topics. The web site has a form that veterinarians can fill out to enroll. Check it out! Students are willing to use this site to learn more about "life in the real world". Most topics are veterinary related topics, but the VMAA Board would like to expand to other topics such as: How do I get lunch daily when I'm booked solid? How do I negotiate a work contract? How do I balance my career and being a new mom? See where this is going? The topics and opportunities are endless. We all have something to contribute. Help the students become successful in the profession.

Another advantage of technology is that communication is now a super highway instead of a two-way street. We can get information out to you quickly and efficiently. But more importantly, now you can get information back to the VMAA at ISU. I already touched on Facebook. We have many ways to communicate. So to stay connected, we would like to know when important events happen in your life that you would like to share with

others in the VMAA at ISU. Maybe it's that promotion, career change, or something more personal such as the death of a colleague or family member. The VMAA at ISU can share your news via Facebook. But we will only do this after we have your permission. Send your news on your membership form or by email to [vmaaisu@iastate.edu](mailto:vmaaisu@iastate.edu).

You now know the 2021 game plan. We have the leadership. You make the commitment. We will all step up, sacrifice and put in the hard work when it is needed to make the VMAA at ISU an ongoing success! Go CYCLONES-FOREVER TRUE!

Mark Brinkman, DVM; Communications Chairperson, VMAA at ISU