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Report from 1969 AVMA Convention

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The student chapters of AVMA have never had a legally organized national conference of delegates at AVMA conventions. Continuity from year to year was poor as no minutes were kept, no delegates returned to the convention a second time as a student, and no publication kept delegates informed on student problems and accomplishments. Consequently, no real results for the local student chapters were obtained. The delegate and alternate delegate did benefit as they met other veterinary students, exchanged some views during a short meeting, and, principally, got their first exposure to a national AVMA convention.

At this 106th Convention in Minneapolis the proposal was adopted to form a National Conference of Student Chapters of the AVMA. This will offer students a solution to the above mentioned problems yet still retain the auspices of the AVMA as a parent organization. The veterinary student of today has both problems and contributions to veterinary medicine that can best be handled through an official national organization. For example, some of the topics discussed were national board examinations, state reciprocities in standardizing licensing, increasing AVMA membership in its embryonic stage at student chapter levels, early promotion of veterinary medicine by students to the public, and student-faculty curriculum evaluations. These are only a few areas where students can and will work toward improvement of their new-found profession, and these are student or student-related problems that are, unfortunately, often not a concern of veterinarians after graduation.

Other topics discussed were possible summer exchange programs in clinics between schools, establishment of a speakers bureau between schools for the purpose of getting good speakers for chapter meetings, and intercollege continuity with uniform educational standards.

This organization is student operated, financed, and organized except for the help of an advisor from the staff of the AVMA. Therefore, if the organization becomes too large nationally, the burden on the executive council and finances could become large enough to make student operation a real problem. However, this possibility was not considered great enough to offset the good that could be done. Also, the intent behind the National Conference of Student Chapters was not to centralize student chapters but merely to organize the delegates so they could do more good for their own chapter.

Any questions or answers stimulated by this report will be welcomed by the authors.

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