Merck Scholars Program Enjoys Another Successful Year in 1997

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SCAVMA Basic Sciences Award

Steven Safris†

James A. Roth, DVM, PhD was awarded the SCAVMA Basic Sciences Award at the Spring 1997 Awards Ceremony. Dr. Roth is a Distinguished Professor in the MIPM Department at the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Roth's research is involved in immunosuppression and immunomodulation. In his work with respiratory diseases, he "investigates molecular aspects of neutrophil dysfunction associated with stress, viral infection, or bacterial virulence factors" and how these defects can be reversed with "biologic response modifiers." Dr. Roth is also involved in work regarding retrovirus infections in cattle. Dr. Roth has published extensively in JAVMA, as well as in other journals. Dr. Roth is responsible for teaching the immunology course taken by first-year veterinary students, and he is well-respected and well-liked as a teacher. Dr. Roth is a very deserving recipient of the SCAVMA Basic Sciences Award.

Cathy Cunningham, SCAVMA President in Spring of 1997, presents Dr. James Roth with a plaque for the SCAVMA Basic Sciences Award.

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Once again, for the seventh year in a row, Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine students participated in a research program sponsored by the Merck Company Foundation. Last spring, VM1 and VM2 students submitted research proposals which they and their mentors designed. Nine student proposals were selected, and research was conducted over the summer. The Merck Company Foundation funded seven Merck scholar stipends and research costs, and the College of Veterinary Medicine supported two scholars. The program facilitator, Dr. David Hopper, and program director, Dr. Prem Paul, led students in meetings every other week throughout the summer, exposing scholars to many aspects of research such as grant writing, research as a career, and regulatory concerns of using animals in research.

In early August, the Merck Scholars had the privilege of visiting the Merck/Merial research facility near Fulton, Missouri. Drs. Bruce Kunkle and Raymond Plue presented topics on product development, experimental design, and veterinary careers in the pharmaceutical industry. Additionally, Merck employees led students on a tour of the laboratories and gave brief descriptions of their jobs. Two highlights of the tour were visiting the on-site feedmill and a demonstration from the laboratory entomologist.

†Sophi Franck is a third-year veterinary student at the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine.
Over the course of the summer, students also were able to visit the National Animal Disease Center in Ames, IA, the ISU biotechnology facilities, Boehringer Ingelheim in St. Joseph, MO, and the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine in Columbia, MO.

Merck scholars presented the results of their research at the end of the summer with a brief oral review. The presentations were well attended by Merial (formerly Merck Ag Vet) representative Dr. John Melancon and faculty, staff, and students of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Students, mentors, and research projects were as follows:

**Hans Koehnk, VM2**
Construction of a Genomic Library of *Lawsonia intracellularis* and its screening using convalescent sera from *L. intracellularis*-infected pigs
Mentors: Dr. F. Chris Minion, Dr. Michael Roof, and Jeff Knittel

**Julia Hardeman, VM2**
The protection of pheasant chicks from rotaviral enteric disease by passive administration of super-concentrated antibody
Mentor: Dr. Don Reynolds

**Kenneth Allen, VM3**
Cytoplasmic Effects of Pasteurella Toxin on Hepatocytes
Mentor: Dr. Norman Cheville

**Matt Anderson, VM3**
Assessing the role of porcine cytomegalovirus in respiratory disease in young pigs: A field-based study
Mentors: Drs. Kyoung-Jin Yoon and Jeffrey Zimmerman

**Sophi Franck, VM3**
Multiplex PCR for enterotoxigenic, attaching:effacing, and Shiga toxin producing *Escherichia coli* from calves
Mentors: Drs. Harley Moon and Brad Bosworth

**Rebecca Madison-Anderson, VM2**
Development of a Technique to Retrieve Equine Oocytes at Iowa State University
Mentors: Drs. Steven Hopkins, Larry Evans, and Curtis Youngs

**Christine Graham, VM2**
Hormone Stimulation Specific for Tumor Growth can be Utilized to Improve Chemotherapeutic Efficacy without Increasing Toxicity
Mentor: Dr. Michael Conzemius

**Shannon Jones, VM2**
The effects of β2 Integrins, Soluble Peptides, and an Oligosaccharide Mimetic on Adherence of Bovine Neutrophils to Selected Extracellular Matrix Proteins
Mentors: Drs. Mark Ackermann and Mark Kehrli

**Susan Naumann, VM2**
Prion Protein Fragment 106-126 Induces a Calcium Dependent Release of Glutamate from Cultured Astrocytes
Mentor: Dr. Srdija Jeftinija

Thanks to the Merck Foundation, ISU College of Veterinary Medicine, mentors, and faculty who guide scholars through the program, students at the College of Veterinary Medicine are allowed a chance to experience research and explore opportunities in alternative careers in veterinary medicine.