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

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