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NEWS & EVENTS

CVM Graduates 114 New Veterinarians

Jerry Jaax, DVM, attended veterinary school at Kansas State University fully expecting to emulate famed veterinarian and author James Herriot and work in a veterinary clinic. However, when he graduated in 1972, "The Vietnam War was raging, and hiring," he said. Jaax joined the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps, as did his wife, Nancy Jaax, DVM, one year later. The couple, who met while in veterinary school, went on to pursue their careers together, their combined active duty service totaling 54 years.

Jaax addressed the MU College of Veterinary Medicine Class of 2015 during commencement exercises May 15. He recounted his and his wife's intertwined careers in the field of one medicine – the convergence of animal and human health -- even before the term "one medicine" became commonly used. The duo's military career included several years in Germany, where they cared for Army sentry dogs and isolated a coronavirus that infected some of the animals; working with deadly pathogens at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious



Keynote speaker Jerry Jaax, DVM, spoke about his and his wife's long careers as veterinarians for the U.S. Army.



The CVM Class of 2015 recites The Veterinarian's Oath.

Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland; immunizing horses with botulinum toxin during Operation Desert Storm; and responding to an Ebola outbreak in monkeys in Reston, Virginia.

Jaax encouraged the graduates to consider the possibility that they may come to a similar fork in the road of their own career paths.

"It happened to us and it might happen to you," he said. "When it comes to your personal goals, aspirations and dreams, why couldn't it be you, indeed?"

Dean Neil C. Olson served as the master of ceremonies for the 66th annual commencement during which 114 students received their DVM. Charles Barry, DVM, president of the Missouri Veterinary Medical Association, led the graduates in reciting the Veterinarian's Oath. Ron Cott, DVM, associate dean for Student and Alumni Affairs and director of Advancement, presented the graduating class for investiture, which was conducted by Linda Berent, associate dean for Academic Affairs, Carrie Duran, DVM, adjunct teaching professor, and Joan Coates, DVM, professor. Cathleen Kovarik, DVM, and Brian Frappier, DVM, both associate teaching professors, also assisted in the investiture. MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin conferred the doctor of veterinary medicine degree to the class members.

Veterinarians completing internships, residencies and graduate programs at the CVM also received recognition during the ceremony.

Members of the Class of 2015 selected Katherine Nadolny, DVM, to give the response on their behalf. Nadolny spoke about first meeting her classmates as strangers at the Veterinary



Nathaniel Socrates Kollias receives his hood from Associate Dean Linda Berent, DVM, and Adjunct Teaching Professor Carrie Duran, DVM.



Dean Neil C. Olson congratulates new veterinarian Jenifer Sniezek.



Katherine Nadolny, DVM, offers a response on behalf of her class.

Enrichment and Teambuilding orientation, where they shared bunk beds and awkward hugs, climbed on inflatable floats in a lake, and talked about their feelings for hours.

"Our lives have been intertwined for the last four years," she said.

She recalled eating stale three-day old Chinese food at 2 a.m. while working in the Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care Section, and congratulated her classmates for their hard work that was rewarded with a 100 percent pass rate on the national licensing exam. She also thanked the clinicians and house officers for going above and beyond in teaching. "Your passion and work ethic has been an example to us," she said.

Nadolny noted that the students had experienced many sleepless nights while undertaking the veterinary curriculum, and that they were aware there will be many more future sleepless nights in their future.

"This is the life that we have chosen, the life that we love."

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