

EDUCATION



Association of American  
Veterinary Medical Colleges

**AAVMC Strategic Plan:**  
Action Agenda for Academic  
Veterinary Medicine

ANALYZE

> ACTION

DIVERSITY

RECRUITMENT

ONE HEALTH

CATALYZE

ADVOCATE

DISCOVERY

# NEW PLAN

## **Benefits of the New Plan**

- Enables Board of Directors to prioritize emerging issues
- Creates a more active and responsive management structure
- Aligns strategic initiatives with committee structure
- Establishes highly operationalized, accountable work plans



# VALUE

## THE VALUE OF PLANNING IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

For almost 50 years, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) has shaped the future of veterinary medicine by planning for change and achievement. Founded in 1966, the AAVMC has helped academic veterinary medicine foster remarkable advancements in the profession.

Strategic planning has been a key part of this success, and it has never been more important than it is today. Disruptive changes in technology and culture, changing consumer behavior, rising educational costs, and powerful economic stressors are creating one of the most turbulent operating environments in the history of veterinary medicine and the academic institutions that support it.

With that dynamic environment in mind, AAVMC has developed a new strategic plan that focuses on optimizing resources, flexibility and decisive action while preserving the association's core values and mission. The new plan builds on AAVMC core strengths in gathering and analyzing data, creating forums for thought-leaders and advocating for progress. It also positions the AAVMC to successfully adapt to rapid change while remaining in strategic alignment with the needs of its stakeholders and its operating environment.



# PROCESS

## THE NATURE OF THE PLAN



### The Process

The AAVMC selected management-consulting firm Harrison Coerver & Associates to help develop the new plan. Chosen because of their action-oriented approach to association management, HC&A led three strategic planning sessions as part of the process.

During the 2013 Deans' Conference held in Naples, Florida, organizational leaders assessed academic, professional practice, economic, government and technological trends shaping the present operating environment. They also began to analyze existing organizational structures and resources and consider future conditions.

The AAVMC Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee met in April 2013 in Warrenton, Virginia,

for the second session. Focused on mission and strategic issues such as student debt, pressure on academic teaching hospitals, changes in knowledge delivery systems and other issues, the group considered the AAVMC's organizational strengths and resources in light of threats and opportunities. From this meeting a clear mandate emerged to focus on three objectives:

- **Analyze**
- **Catalyze**
- **Advocate**

Finally, HC&A met with AAVMC staff members in Washington, D.C. in May 2013 to establish work plans and timelines to carry out the three operating objectives that emerged from the two prior planning sessions.



## The Product

The result is a highly responsive, precisely focused, action-oriented plan designed to create a stronger, more prosperous future for academic veterinary medicine and the profession and society it serves. While firmly embracing the AAVMC's overarching core values and mission, the new plan creates a nimble operating structure that enables the organization to respond quickly and effectively to change. Challenges and opportunities emerging from the profession's dynamic operating environment rise quickly to the leadership agenda for strategic consideration and action.

The plan also places a premium on work performance and accountability. Work plans with measurable tasks and timelines in individual program areas have been created to achieve organizational goals.

## Vision Statement

To promote and protect the health and welfare of animals, people and the environment by generating new knowledge and preparing the high-quality veterinary workforce needed to meet continually changing societal demands for veterinary expertise.

PROGRESS >

# THREE CORE COMPONENTS



---

## Analyze

*Acquire, analyze and add value to data that will advance scholarship and advocacy*

---

## Catalyze

*Strengthen AAVMC's role as facilitator and catalyst for challenges, innovation and contemporary issues*

---

## Advocate

*Strengthen advocacy and communication to inform and increase influence with government, the profession and relevant stakeholders*



## Analyze

*Acquire, analyze and add value to data that will advance scholarship and advocacy*

High-quality empirical data provides the foundation for every decision and every program in organizations that are science-driven and evidence-based. Fortunately, it is a historic and fundamental strength of the AAVMC that continues to grow in utility and power.

Data gathered by AAVMC helps member institutions share best practices, improve performance, and inform planning for the future through environmental scanning and trend analysis. AAVMC data also helps collaborating organizations, businesses and other stakeholders succeed in the complex enterprise of modern veterinary medicine.

## Catalyze

*Strengthen AAVMC's role as facilitator and catalyst for challenges, innovation and contemporary issues*

Bringing the best minds in academic veterinary medicine together to focus on the issues of the day and envision a brighter future is also a historic role and strength of the AAVMC. AAVMC meetings buzz with intellectual energy and creativity. Innovation and discovery born of insight and collaboration at these gatherings has led to countless advancements in veterinary education.

Technology has now created opportunities for new forms of synergy as virtual meetings and instant digital communities focus the power of cooperation in real time. The *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, the AAVMC's peer-reviewed academic journal, is playing an increasingly important role in establishing virtual communities of intellectual interest and collaboration.

## Advocate

*Strengthen advocacy and communication to inform and increase influence with government, the profession and relevant stakeholders*

Effective communication, mutual understanding and advocacy are paramount in a world linked more profoundly and more instantaneously than ever before by digital communications. Advocating for academic veterinary medicine was a core goal behind the creation of the AAVMC in 1966; in today's hyper-communicated world, it is mission-critical.

Federal and state governments pass legislation, create regulations and shape policy every day in ways that can advance and constrain the profession. Protecting and promoting our public policy interests requires real-time monitoring and action. Compounding this urgency is the speed with which technology-enabled interest groups create grassroots political movements and coalitions that coincide or contrast with AAVMC interests. That same hyper-connectivity has made it imperative for successful organizations to speak — and listen — to their stakeholders with clarity and attention.



ADVOCATE



### Mission Statement

The AAVMC provides leadership for and promotes excellence in academic veterinary medicine to prepare the veterinary workforce with the scientific knowledge and skills required to meet societal needs.

---

**Achieving Educational  
Excellence**

*Academic Affairs Committee*

---

**Recruiting High-Quality  
Future Professionals**

*Admissions and  
Recruitment Committee*

---

**Enhancing Diversity in the  
Veterinary Profession**

*Diversity Committee*

---

**Promoting a One Health  
Approach to Global Wellbeing**

*One Health Committee*

---

**Fostering the Power of  
Discovery**

*Research Committee*



**COMMITTEE STRUCTURE  
ALIGNED WITH  
ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

**STRUCTURE**

**Values Statement**

AAVMC programs and operations are informed and enriched by the enterprise-wide adoption of the values of leadership, excellence, inclusion, collaboration, transparency, adaptability and stewardship.

These core efforts to analyze, catalyze, and advocate are fully integrated with the mission and values of the AAVMC and are aligned with the committee structure of the organization. As a result, committee members have an opportunity to more fully engage with staff on the conception and operation of programs that support the achievement of committee goals.

The AAVMC's standing committees on Academic Affairs, Admissions and Recruitment, Diversity, One Health, and Research intersect with the core initiatives to form an operating matrix for the action agenda.





## Achieving Educational Excellence

### *Academic Affairs Committee*

The responsibility of preparing new generations of veterinarians to care for people and animals in a rapidly changing world demands educational excellence. The AAVMC's member institutions develop curricula that respond to changing environments and prepare students for professional success in a rapidly evolving medical discipline. The AAVMC develops leaders in academic veterinary medicine and throughout the profession.

Through groups such as the AAVMC Primary Care Veterinary Educators (PCVE), a sub-committee of the Academic Affairs Committee, the AAVMC works to ensure that veterinary students receive instruction in areas that correspond to the changing needs of modern practice environments. It leads in helping the profession provide its graduates with training in life skills such as interpersonal communication, collaboration, teamwork, and business management. It seeks to provide forums where new ideas and best practices regarding skills, knowledge and aptitudes can be developed, refined and exchanged.

The AAVMC also provides leadership in helping member institutions embrace changing technologies like e-learning, working to encourage association-wide consortia that can combine resources and leverage individual strengths for the advancement of all.

# RECRUITMENT



## Recruiting High-Quality Future Professionals

*Admissions and Recruitment Committee*

The rigors and responsibilities of modern veterinary medicine require the best and the brightest students. The AAVMC conducts short and long-range examinations of the profession's applicant pool, ensuring the availability of a stream of highly qualified applicants. The applicant pool for those aspiring to become veterinarians remains strong, in spite of highly publicized veterinary economic issues regarding salaries, workforce opportunities, tuition costs, and student debt.

The AAVMC works closely with admissions personnel at member institutions and sponsors workshops, conferences, meetings and related symposia to support admissions and recruitment. The AAVMC is developing a national recruitment strategy to help identify, inspire and recruit those students best suited for careers in veterinary medicine.

The AAVMC's Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS) is continually upgraded to provide prospective students and member institutions with highly efficient student recruitment and applicant processing services.



## Enhancing Diversity in the Veterinary Profession

*Diversity Committee*

Developing a professional veterinary medical workforce that is more reflective of the diverse tapestry of ethnic, racial, and underrepresented and disadvantaged groups that characterize modern society has been a core goal of the AAVMC for more than 30 years.

The AAVMC has been a pioneering leader in promoting diversity for the entire veterinary medical profession. Substantial progress has been achieved through innovative programs such as DiVersity Matters. However, much more work needs to be done in order to ensure the viability of diverse, inclusive environments on the campuses of our member institutions and throughout the profession.

The AAVMC works to actively achieve success in this area by supporting programs that encourage the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students, staff, and faculty on our campuses. The AAVMC also seeks to educate all stakeholders about the enduring value of inclusive environments.



# DIVERSITY

## Promoting a One Health Approach to Global Wellbeing

*One Health Committee*

For most of the 20th century, society viewed veterinary medicine primarily as an animal health medical discipline. In recent years, highly publicized public health threats like pandemic influenza have helped many realize the fundamental linkages between veterinary medicine and human health. Veterinary medicine plays a critical role in promoting the bounty, safety and security of the food supply, helps protect the public from zoonotic infectious diseases, and contributes to important biomedical research.

Today, many leaders in science and medicine have adopted a One Health approach to global wellbeing. One Health recognizes the complex interrelationships that exist between people, animals and the environment as they interact in an era of globalization. One Health encourages a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to human, animal and environmental health.

The AAVMC works to engage member institution students and faculty on One Health initiatives underway in federal and international agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization and others.



**One Health  
in Veterinary  
Medical  
Education**

- Global Connections
- Spanning Disciplines
- Creating Vision



# > RESEARCH

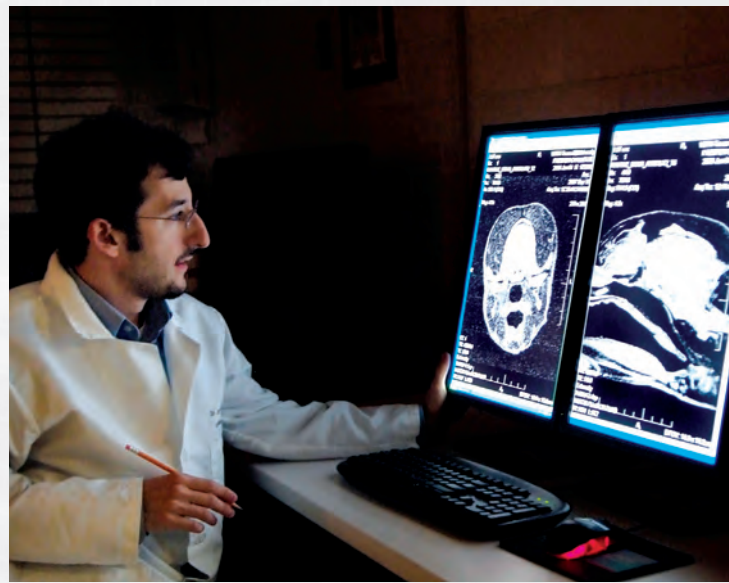
## Fostering the Power of Discovery

### *Research Committee*

The discovery of knowledge is a process that functions at the heart of civilization itself. In 2012-2013, almost \$500 million was spent on research related activities at American colleges of veterinary medicine, with basic and applied inquiries spanning every dimension of the biomedical sciences.

Advancements made through research improve the quality of life for people and animals, and play an important role in economic development and sustainability. Research also informs the educational process on university campuses, helping faculty members produce and transmit the newest information to students.

The AAVMC works to support the growth of the research enterprise at member institutions by partnering with the Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU), the American Veterinary Medical Association and other organizations. It also works closely with the National Institutes of Health, The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Academies, Congress and executive agencies to foster the development of resources to advance research at its member institutions.



# STRATEGIC PLAN



## Analyze

Acquire, analyze and add value to data that will advance scholarship and advocacy

## Catalyze

Strengthen AAVMC's role as facilitator and catalyst for challenges, innovation and contemporary issues

## Advocate

Strengthen advocacy and communication to inform and increase influence with government, the profession and relevant stakeholders

### Achieving Educational Excellence

Academic Affairs Committee

Coordinate peer review of multi-institutional surveys related to veterinary medical educational programs, and the collection of data related to faculty demographics and teaching hospital caseloads at member institutions

Support organizations like the AAVMC Veterinary Educators Collaborative and the AAVMC Primary Care Veterinary Educators that promote instructional excellence; organize task forces, convene meetings and symposia, produce reports and papers on important issues in veterinary medical education

Develop public and federal support through communication and government relations programs; promote high standards of scholarship through *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*

### Recruiting High-Quality Future Professionals

Admissions and Recruitment Committee

Study current recruitment activities at institutional and professional level; gather information regarding perceptions and behavior among prospective students, applicants and others

Present workshops, meetings and career fair opportunities for aspiring veterinarians, pre-vet advisors and other communities of interest

Produce targeted communications for health professions advisors, potential applicants and the general public; promote efficiencies and opportunities through VMCAS and WebAdmit; work to achieve economically viable and sustainable educational systems

### Enhancing Diversity in the Veterinary Profession

Diversity Committee

Collect and analyze demographic data concerning applicant pool, enrolled student body and faculty at member institutions; develop assessment tools for use in monitoring campus climate

Present Iverson Bell symposium and regional educational symposia at member institutions; partner with the national Center for Diversity and Inclusion

Lead coalition of academic health professions organizations seeking best practices and opportunities to advance diversity across disciplines; support federal diversity programs and work with Congressional Black, Hispanic and Asian Pacific American caucuses; work with policy-makers at all levels to encourage climate of diversity and inclusivity on our campuses

### Promoting a One Health Approach to Global Wellbeing

One Health Committee

Track programmatic offerings at member institutions including MPH and related graduate programs; investigate programs underway in collaborating organizations

Convene meetings and symposia and participate in A Day at CDC for Veterinary Students

Work with a variety of coalitions and stakeholders to promote One Health concept as it relates to the advancement of veterinary medicine and member institutions, including the Congressional Veterinary Medicine Caucus

### Fostering the Power of Discovery

Research Committee

Track trends in research expenditures at member institutions and federal funding of research programs

Convene meetings and symposia, including co-sponsorship of the Meriel NIH Veterinary Scholars Program

Advocate for increased public and private funding for animal health and biomedical research with National Institutes of Health, United States Department of Agriculture and other entities; create greater understanding of the value and role of the veterinary scientist in research

The AAVMC is a nonprofit membership organization working to protect and improve the health and welfare of animals, people and the environment by advancing academic veterinary medicine.

Its members include 35 veterinary medical colleges in the United States and Canada, nine departments of veterinary science, eight departments of comparative medicine, thirteen international colleges of veterinary medicine, and six affiliate colleges of veterinary medicine.





**Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges**

1101 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 301, Washington, DC 20005-3536  
202-371-9195 • [www.aavmc.org](http://www.aavmc.org)