



Actions to Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

We are a community that prides itself on its diversity, equity, and inclusion, and understands that we are comprised of individuals having many perspectives and identities. The pandemic and its disproportionate effects on communities of color dramatically illustrate the failures of our healthcare and social justice systems in the United States and around the world. Recent reports of injustice and violence toward African-Americans—including the killing of George Floyd and others—elicit feelings of disgust, fear, anxiety, and grief, especially in the context of the persistent history of racism in our country. Our School has renewed our commitment to our [Principles of Community](#) in our most recent Strategic Plan. Recognizing that we must have a sustained effort that is guided by current events and continuous needs for improvement, we are also committed to specific actions to promote these important goals, but also to address social justice, racial discrimination, and positive community engagement. The purpose of this summary document is to provide an overview of diversity, equity, and inclusion activities ongoing at the School, progress towards our goals, action plans to address systemic racism in our work and communities, and to solicit community feedback on how our plans and actions can align and address societal needs.

Overview

The veterinary profession in the United States, including California, originally was dominated by white males. This shifted dramatically in the last few decades through the 1972 passage of Title IX, with white women becoming the overwhelming majority. Through a combined effort of national and local efforts by academic institutions and others, progress has been made to diversify the profession. [Based on the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges \(AAVMC\)](#), the number of racially or ethnically underrepresented students currently stands at 17.4% of total enrollment. That figure continues to grow and has increased 134% since the 2005 launch of the AAVMC DiVersity Matters initiative.

Based on AAVMC defined criteria, UC Davis' veterinary student diversity consistently ranks among the top 3 schools or colleges in the United States, with ~40% non-white student population. We have continued as a key element of our strategy, to enhance our support for our diversity goals or created new programs to define and achieve our diversity goals and promote a positive climate. It is our goal to broaden the diversity of our faculty, staff and student community to represent the demographics of our society. Through multiple programs, we have worked to communicate the value and relevance of veterinary medicine to underrepresented minority (URM) communities to increase URM student and staff interest levels in the profession. To focus this area, we hired a Director of Diversity and Inclusion to lead these efforts.

We also ranked among the top of all U.S. veterinary schools for faculty ethnic diversity. All faculty members serving on search committees are required to take training sessions on unconscious bias and diversity goals for the university. All faculty searches are made aware of our SVM Strategic Goals in diversity and inclusion. Our School has actively invested and engaged in campus-wide programs to recruit underrepresented minority faculty members. Our School was one of the first participants in the National Science Foundation, CAMPOS program and the recent Office of the President's Diversity Hiring Initiative.

Beginning the first day of veterinary school, entering students participate in the week-long introductory course we refer to as “Prologue.” On the very first day, students are welcomed to the school’s diverse community of learners and hear about our commitment to supporting an environment that supports diversity and inclusion. From the beginning of school, the diversity and inclusion message are taught to engage students in the richness of our diversity and to set the tone for the inclusive and welcoming environment for which we strive. Promoting of conversation and dialogue are part of these early days of veterinary school and a demonstration of the school’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

We know that all of these efforts and statistics do not accomplish our goals, and specific actions are needed to fully create a more welcoming community consistent with the Principles of Community. At our School, we affirm our support for Black lives, acknowledge racism and connect with a shared commitment to address it. We must educate ourselves to racial injustice, social inequities, and systematic barriers that prevent opportunities and suppress the very communities we wish to welcome into our profession. The following actions represent a starting point to expand our efforts and further our commitment.

Recent and Ongoing Actions

Student Recruitment

Recent actions directly aimed to increase diversity in the student body include:

- Successfully raised funds for scholarships that make UC Davis more affordable – created specific recruitment scholarships for URM students to enhance our diversity goals.
- [Summer Enrichment Program](#) — Prepared disadvantaged students with clinical experiences in the teaching hospital, GRE study resources, and DVM career options.
- [SMASH Academy](#) (Summer Math and Science Honors) — The school offers veterinary educational sessions as part of this 5-week residential program for high-achieving, URM high school students aims to engender excitement and some understanding in STEM fields that hopefully one day will lead them to UCD and then hopefully our SVM.
- Student outreach to high-concentration Latino populations in the Central Valley from the Tulare facility (facility tours and travel to events)
- Davis High School students (many URM or first generation students) interested in veterinary medicine participated in Vet-for-a-Day, an outreach effort hosted by the school
- Virtual information session with Tuskegee University, an HBCU
- Advertised Master’s in Preventive Veterinary Medicine program in *INSIGHT into Diversity* magazine’s annual Veterinary/Medical/Dental/Health Professions and Sciences School issue
- This Is How We Role launched this year to Latino serving community. Catered to K-4, to teach them about vet med careers.
- Student Programs team presented to about ~60 8th grade students in Vallejo (high diverse population)
- Student Programs invited UC Merced pre-vet club at campus during Diversity Week
- Student Programs has removed barriers to travel and offers online info sessions to students in remote locations and Southern states in the U.S.

Faculty Recruitment

Recent actions directly aimed to increase faculty diversity include:

- Faculty participate in [STEAD](#) training (Strength Through Equity and Diversity) which trains faculty search committee members on best practices to reduce bias and achieve excellence, diversity, and equity in faculty recruitment.
- In addition, a staff HR representative attends all first recruitment advisory committee meetings for faculty recruitments to reiterate STEAD training best practice and requirements.
- SVM participated in the [Advancing Faculty Diversity Grant](#) recruitment in September 2019.
- The first Terry Holiday Endowed Presidential Chair was awarded to URM faculty member.
- Supported junior faculty to attend the [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity's](#) Faculty Success Program.
- SVM includes and highlights the expectation to uphold the Principles of Community in all faculty recruitment announcements and offer letters.

Diversity and Cultural Awareness - Overall

Recent actions directly aimed at increasing diversity and cultural awareness include:

- Leadership actively participates in the campus executive leadership team of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office.
- Staff, Faculty, and Students from UC Davis SVM and the UC Davis School of Medicine partner to provide veterinary and medical services to the underserved agricultural community of Knights Landing, California.
- Formerly known as One Health Nicaragua (OHN), MOSAIC is a multidisciplinary, faculty supported and student-led project aimed at developing sustainable solutions to address complex health problems and alleviate poverty in vulnerable, rural communities throughout California.
- Partnered with the UC Davis Veterinary Students as One in Culture and Ethnicity (VOICE) to organize our annual Diversity Day.
- Increased Diversity Day to Diversity Week Activities that included: "Courageous Conversations", presented by Deborah McKnight, M.S., Ed.D. Panel Discussion.
- Formed a Multicultural Seminar Series and Community Dialogue.
- Forty faculty and staff members completed an online Diversity Training Certificate Program.
- Incorporated Principles of Community and cultural sensitivity raining into VET400 curriculum.
- Supported student programs and activities, such as VOICE chapter and work at Knight's Landing One Health Clinic, where students encounter underrepresented (largely Latino) clients.
- Created an SVM Community Council of staff, students, and faculty (in process, launch expected August 2020).

National Program Participation

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

In 2005, the AAVMC launched the [DiVersity Matters](#) program, which conducts career fairs, disseminates information about veterinary career options, works to generate interest in veterinary medicine, presents at key diversity meetings and conferences, and helps lead students through the application process. The AAVMC has also incorporated diversity goals in its strategic plan to ensure that it remains a commitment. UC Davis benefits from these programs through their support of the student recruitment pipeline and is actively involved at the leadership level to promote these goals e.g., Dean Lairmore recently served as President of the AAVMC.

This is How We Role: Purdue University

Our School actively participates in “This is How We Role” program with a long-term goal of diversifying the veterinarian-scientist workforce. The program, organized by Purdue University, is supported by the Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) program of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Tactics to Consider or Develop to Further School Strategic Goal 5 - Promote a Vibrant and Diverse Community of Faculty, Staff and Students to Advance the Mission of the School in an Engaged and Respectful Community

- Develop a School-wide, student-led initiative to create a social justice speaker series to the School.
- Create safe environments for dialogue in the School to discuss racially-motivated incidents in the School.
- Create and distribute educational materials about racism in America and how to confront and educate ourselves and our community.
- Work with the faculty to incorporate social justice and anti-racism training into appropriate areas of the curriculum and training programs.

Select Additional Resources

UC Davis

School of Veterinary Medicine [Strategic Plan](#)

Veterinary Hospital [Strategic Plan](#)

UC Davis [Racial Trauma Resources](#)

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

[AAVMC Strategic Plan](#)

[AAVMC Position Statement](#)

[AAVMC Diversity Leadership Committee](#)

Additional Information

Lisa Greenhill, MPA, EdD, senior director for institutional research and diversity at the AAVMC [on diversity in Veterinary Medicine](#) (2019)

Recommendations [on supporting African American students in the sciences](#)