

Dear members of the DVM Class of 2026,

Congratulations on your acceptance to the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine's Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program! You have worked so hard for this incredible accomplishment. As you reach the next step towards your dream, our VMCVM community cannot wait to support you on your journey.

When I received my acceptance letter, I remember the initial excitement and feeling of accomplishment. Over the next few months, I challenge you to embrace those thoughts and practice bringing them to the forefront of your mind. Gearing up for your first semester will be a whirlwind, but orientation, and the information you receive, will set you up to jump head first into our community.

This jump will be the most exciting aspect of your veterinary school career. Our college, your college, provides a wide range of opportunity. One of the ways to explore and participate in these opportunities is through organizations and clubs as part of our SAVMA Chapter. SAVMA is the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association, the student sector of the American Veterinary Medical Association, or AVMA. At our college, SAVMA serves as an "Umbrella" to student activities, much like a student government. The main purpose of our organization is to serve the student body by providing support to student organizations.

These organizations offer a wide variety of activities for any path in the veterinary field. Whether you are interested in large animal, small animal, research, public health, or a specific specialty, there is a club here for you. From hands-on wet labs to case-based discussions, there are multiple ways to further your education outside of the classroom. SAVMA itself also strives to improve your education by offering financial wellness and debt panels, weekly yoga, free coffee during

finals, and social events to take a break from studying. I encourage you all to find an extracurricular activity you enjoy to help balance your heavy workload.

On a national level, SAVMA plays a role in representing VMCVM within the veterinary profession. The SAVMA leadership attends three national conventions to represent our chapter. These conventions allow us to advocate for our students in bettering the work force we will all be entering. It also allows us to learn from other colleges so that we can provide you all with the best experience during your time here.

As your SAVMA President, I hope you find a way to be involved with our college outside of the classroom. If you ever need assistance getting involved, or just need input from someone who has been in your shoes, please do not hesitate to reach out. My job is to be a resource and advocate for DVM students as they navigate the ups and downs of such a challenging curriculum.

There are numerous opportunities and experiences to look forward to when you arrive on campus. Until then, remember that excitement of opening your acceptance letter. Vet school will be a challenge. Some days you will feel on top of the world, driven by your passion. Other days, you will just be plain tired, and that's okay. Those are the moments that you can remind yourself how impressive and capable you truly are. You were accepted to this program because you are supposed to be here. No person, exam grade, or long day can change that.

Welcome to the DVM Class of 2026. We are so excited to meet you!

Sincerely,

Sadye Soffin
VMCVM SAVMA President