

News from the NCVP

FALL 2023

People

Our attitude of gratitude...



Thank you Dr. Byron Blagburn, Original NCVP Board Member

After many years of invaluable service, Dr. Byron Blagburn is stepping back from his role as a key NCVP advisory board member as he embarks on his long-deserved retirement from Auburn University.

After receiving a master's degree from Andrews University and a doctorate in parasitology from the University of Illinois, Byron joined the faculty at Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine and went on to build a veterinary parasitology research, teaching, and continuing education program unrivaled by any other in excellence, reach, and impact.

In addition to being one of the undisputed parasitology G.O.A.T.s (Greatest of All Time),



The incredible Dr. Byron Blagburn

Dr. Blagburn served as an inaugural board member for NCVP and consistently contributed to the Center for more than a decade, working tirelessly to grow and promote our programs. A few of his many other leadership roles include pastpresident of the American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists (AAVP), the Companion Animal Parasite Council, the Southeastern Society of Parasitologists, and the Southern Conference on Animal Parasites. In 2001, the AAVP selected Dr. Blagburn for the Distinguished Veterinary Parasitologist Award, the highest honor bestowed by this organization.

Under Byron's leadership and careful guidance, Auburn served as a valuable adjunct training ground for several former NCVP residents and parasitology graduate students. His contributions to veterinary parasitology are nothing short of legendary and NCVP will always be grateful for his insight, advice, and passion for parasitology. While we are excited for this next chapter, we will miss him every day of every meeting. (*Please see page 8 for a very special tribute photo*.)

Congratulations on your much deserved retirement, Byron — and thank you!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Changes in NCVP Board
- Activities at AAVP 2023
- Fall Meeting with Residents and Advisory Board

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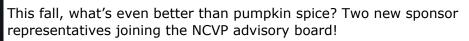
Board Meeting

New NCVP Board Members!

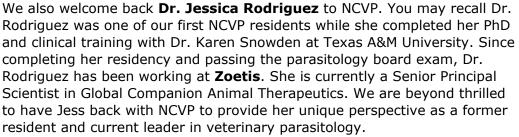
People continued...

Welcome, and Welcome Back!

Dr. Wade Burton



Dr. Wade Burton will serve as the representative for **IDEXX**. Dr. Burton earned his DVM degree from Texas A&M University and worked as a mixed animal practitioner and clinic owner before moving to industry as a Technical Services Veterinarian. He joined IDEXX in 2015 and has become heavily involved with the AAVP and American Heartworm Society (AHS). We are fortunate to have his leadership on the NCVP Board!





FALL 2023

Dr. Jessica Rodriguez Zoetis

So happy to have you both with us on this exciting journey!

Dr. Matt Brewer, Iowa State University



Dr. Matt Brewer, Iowa State University

The NCVP is delighted to welcome **Dr. Matt Brewer**, DVM, PhD, DACVM (Parasitology) to our advisory board as our newest academic board member. Dr. Brewer is an Associate Professor and the Dr. Frank K. Ramsey Endowed Chair at **Iowa State University** (ISU) where he is active in parasitology research, diagnostic service, and both veterinary and graduate student education.

Dr. Brewer earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire before going on to receive both his DVM and a PhD in Pharmacology from ISU. After completing his training, Matt joined the faculty at Iowa State and embarked on a stellar career that has energized the clinical parasitology service at ISU while also growing veterinary parasitology research with a particular focus on mechanisms of action of antiparasiticides.

Matt has worked with NCVP for many years as an extraordinary mentor training NCVP-funded residents—including **Dr. Jeba Jesudoss Chelladurai**, now on faculty at Kansas State University, and **Dr. Katy Martin**, who is in the final year of her residency at ISU. He is also a recipient of competitive research grants from the NCVP, and his expertise in parasites of animals both large and small will provide valuable input into NCVP programs as they continue to expand.

Thanks for joining the board, Matt-it should be a fun ride!



And Welcome Back to OSU Dr. Starkey!



GO POKES!

This summer **Dr. Lindsay Starkey**, DVM, PhD, DACVM (Parasitology) returned to her alma mater (Oklahoma State University's College of Veterinary Medicine) where she completed her DVM in 2011, PhD in 2015, and residency training through the NCVP.

Lindsay embarked on her professional academic career in 2016, joining the faculty at Auburn University as an Assistant Professor, and quickly rose through the ranks, gaining experience as a parasitologist and recognition as an outstanding teacher, and ultimately receiving tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

Dr. Starkey is an exceptional parasitologist with considerable expertise in teaching, diagnostics, and research. She has received two teaching awards, including the Zoetis Distinguished Teacher Award in March 2020. In addition to her role on the NCVP advisory board and now as a core NCVP-OSU team member, Lindsay also serves on the board of the American Heartworm Society. She has worked extensively with heartworm and other

vector-borne pathogens, parasite consultations, and continuing education. We are excited to have her re-join the OSU parasitology team and look forward to many happy new parasite experiences!

Welcome Lindsay—it's great to have you back home!



Introducing Our Newest Amazing Resident—Dr. Sawsan Ammar!

We are delighted to welcome **Dr. Sawsan Ammar** as our newest NCVP resident. Sawsan will complete her clinical parasitology residency training at the **University of Calgary**'s Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) under the supervision of **Dr. John Gilleard** (UCVM), **Dr. Andrew Peregrine** (University of Guelph, NCVP Board Member), and **Dr. Jennifer Davies** (Director of Diagnostic Services, UCVM). In addition to being an excellent resident candidate, Sawsan and her mentors successfully developed the first NCVP-funded training program in Canada. Beauty, eh?

Dr. Ammar completed her veterinary training at the University of Sadat City in Egypt and her PhD on *Toxoplasma gondii* in wild birds under the supervision of Drs. Richard Gerhold and John Schaefer at the University of Tennessee's College of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to accepting the NCVP residency, she was already busy working as a postdoctoral researcher validating and optimizing MALDI TOF MS for parasite identification and diagnostic use at the UCVM. Given her extensive previous experience, she will complete her residency training in two years, and we are confident that she will gain incredible expertise in research, diagnostic, and clinical parasitology during that time.



Dr. Sawsan Ammar, NCVP Resident University of Calgary



Welcome Sawsan—we are so glad to have you in the NCVP family!

People continued...

Even More Student Success Stories!

Dr. Katy Martin, Elanco Resident, Completes MS Degree

Veterinarian, Parasitology Resident, Master of Public Health, and now Master of Science!

Kudos, acclaim, and well-deserved praise are due to **Dr. Katy Martin**, **Elanco Resident at Iowa State University**, for earning her Master of Science degree.

Mentored by **Dr. Matt Brewer** (Iowa State University, NCVP board member), Dr. Martin investigated new compounds that could potentially be used to treat infections of *Tritrichomonas foetus* in cows. Katy earned her DVM degree from Iowa State University, an MPH from the University of Iowa, and is on track to complete her parasitology residency and PhD in June 2024. Just wow!

Congratulations Dr. Martin-nicely done!



Pictured left to right, Dr. Katy Martin along with her research collaborators Drs. Erica Moscoso and Kris Kocach, and advisor Dr. Matt Brewer.

Dr. Megan Lineberry Receives AAVP-Merck Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Congratulations are in order for **Dr. Megan Lineberry**, Senior Scientist, Zoetis, and former NCVP project coordinator! This summer Megan was selected to receive the 2023 AAVP-Merck Animal Health Outstanding Graduate Student Award for her doctoral work on prevalence and distribution of *Cercopithifilaria* spp. and other pathogens in brown dog ticks throughout the United States.



Dr. Megan Lineberry shared an overview of her dissertational research with the AAVP membership at the 2023 meeting as part of the awards ceremony.

Dr. Lineberry conducted her research at Oklahoma State University under the mentorship of **Dr. Kelly Allen**, former NCVP Co-Director, and, in 2022, after completing her PhD, joined the Zoetis parasitology team.

Dr. Lineberry's acceptance presentation at AAVP entitled "Emerging parasitic infections detected in dogs and brown dog ticks in the United States" provided a fascinating and detailed look into this understudied dog / tick / disease system.

We couldn't be happier for you Megan — way to go!

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Events

NCVP at AAVP 2023—Going on a Parasitologist Hunt!

The **68th Annual Meeting** of the **American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists** was held from June 10–13, 2023, in Lexington, Kentucky. This very successful meeting was replete with scientific and plenary sessions, symposia, and award presentations. In addition, the NCVP information booth provided entertaining parasite swag, and NCVP even coordinated a meeting-wide scavenger hunt for parasitologists!





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AAVP 2023 Annual Meeting Lexington, KY Meet parasitol ogists, talk parasites, have fun, win prizes!

ize: Greene's Infectious Diseases of g and Cat, Jane Sykes, Ed. (2022), \$160 USD value nmer up prizes also available! For more info on how to enter please visit the NCVP booth



Popular para-phernalia at the 2023 AAVP included tick pins, dog waste bags, NCVP-branded totes, USB sticks, and glow-in-the-dark parasite tattoos. And of course, I-heart-parasites posters and magnets.

Participating NCVP board members (prey) were given a custom, cool parasite sticker* that they handed out once a student (predator) successfully "hunted" them and spent a few minutes talking parasites. Sticker-filled cards were then put into a drawing where first prize was an autographed copy of Greene's *Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat*, and runner up prizes consisted of bourbon balls and chocolate. A huge hit, planning is underway to repeat and expand this fan favorite in 2024.

Parasites (and parasitologists) are the best kind of fun!

*Special thanks to **Dr. Sarah Myers, BI Resident**, for creating the parasite sticker images! (Images are also sprinkled throughout this newsletter—enjoy!)

NCVP & the AAVP President's Symposium

This summer, NCVP was in the spotlight during the **President's Symposium** led by Dr. Jennifer Ketzis, AAVP President. Titled **"The Future is Now**," this symposium focused on finding solutions to challenges facing veterinary parasitology.



Dr. Ruth Scimeca, NCVP Co-Director, Oklahoma State University, and former NCVP Resident, delivered an incredible overview of the many contributions NCVP has made to the discipline of veterinary parasitology, including shout-outs to all of the amazing sponsors that make NCVP programs possible. Dr. Scimeca's presentation also summarized the 27 institutions that have received NCVP grants totaling nearly \$850K as well as the 18 residents we have supported at 9 different institutions, and provided updates on where all our amazing residents have landed.

Dr. Lindsay Starkey, Oklahoma State University, and **Dr. Tim Geary, McGill University**, current and former NCVP board members, respectively, also participated in the panel which sought to identify issues veterinary parasitology is currently facing and discuss potential strategies to address those concerns.

A great service to the discipline and to the profession as a whole-well done everyone!

Clickers Gonna Click!

NCVP at AAVP means clinical cases!

Ever heard of *Strigiphilus syrnii* or *Kiluluma* **spp**.? Neither had most of the attendees at the NCVP clicker session held at the close of the 2023 AAVP meeting in Lexington this summer. But still they clicked valiantly on...



Pictured left to right: Drs. Cameron Sutherland (Resident at Kansas State University), Mani Lejeune (Emcee, Cornell University), Gui Verocai (Emcee, NCVP Board Member, Texas A&M University), Kamilyah Miller (Resident at Kansas State University), Vishnu Manikantan (Resident at Purdue University), Katy Martin (Elanco Resident at Iowa State University), Ranju Manoj (Merck Resident at Cornell University), Sarah Myers (Boehringer Ingelheim Resident at Oklahoma State University), and Timi Wu (IDEXX Resident at Cornell University). Not pictured, Dr. Nicole Szafranski (Zoetis Resident at University of Tennessee).

Parasitology residents presented clinical cases on *Strigiphilus syrnii* and *Kiluluma* spp. along with other and more well-known parasites to approximately 120 AAVP members in attendance.

Our thanks and appreciation to all the residents who contributed cases (pictured left), and a very special thanks to **Drs. Mani Lejeune and Gui Verocai (NCVP Board Member)** who once again emceed the case discussions and moderated the sometimes rowdy discussions that followed.

Thanks for the fantastic cases everyone!



Want More Cases? Of Course You Do!

One of the most popular landing sites on the <u>NCVP website</u> is our Case of the Month feature led by **Dr. Ruth Scimeca**, NCVP Co-Director. September 2023 did not disappoint! Entitled "Now Serving Eggs A La Parasite" the image and history give a front row seat to a very cool backyard poultry parasite.

Cases go back to 2012 and provide a wonderful blend of veterinary parasites of domestic and wild animals that allow a glimpse into the diagnostic life of a veterinary parasitologist in North America.



What's your diagnosis?

A backyard flock owner in Minnesota found these organisms when she cracked one of their eggs. Click on the photo to see the full case!

Seen an interesting case lately that you'd like to share? We'd be happy to post it! Please reach out to <u>ncvp@okstate.edu</u>. Clever titles always appreciated (but not required).



NCVetP.org

Adventures in Parasitology, 2023-Style

NCVP residents have exciting opportunities for additional training in parasitology beyond their host institutions.

In 2023, Dr. Nicole Szafranski, Zoetis Resident at The University of Tennessee, was able to share her parasitology expertise with veterinary colleagues in Argentina, supporting research into intestinal and systemic parasites of dogs while also spending some time with the polo ponies.





SOCIATION CON

Drs. Timi Wu and Dwight Bowman enjoying the 2023 World Veterinary Association Congress in Taiwan.



Dr. Nicole Szafranski taking a pony-visiting wellness break while participating in field parasitology research in Argentina.

Dr. Timi Wu, IDEXX Resident at Cornell University, and Dr. Dwight Bowman, NCVP advisory board member, attended the World Veterinary Association Congress in Taiwan in April of this year and the 29th International Conference of the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology

(WAAVP) in August. At WAAVP they were joined by Dr. Ranju Manoj, Merck **Resident** at Cornell University. Both conferences facilitated interactions with

parasitologists and other scientists from around the world, providing an incredible opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the discipline as a whole.



Drs. Ranju Manoj and Timi Wu at the 2023 WAAVP Conference in Chennai, India.



And this past summer, **Dr.** Sarah Myers, BI Resident at Oklahoma State University, completed the highly regarded Tick Workshop at the U.S. National Tick Collection, Georgia Southern University.





Dr. Sarah Myers, 7th from right (and sporting an NCVP vest), gathered with her classmates at the Tick Workshop held in May 2023.

When it comes to parasitology it's always choose your own adventure!

NEWS FROM THE NCVP

Fall Meeting Report



It's Always Parasite Season in Stillwater!

Once again, early October in Stillwater finds the entire NCVP population enjoying a host of veterinary parasitology celebratory traditions, including welcoming new and returning advisory board members and residents, relishing updates on residency clinical training progress, and planning for even more exciting projects in the coming year. And as a bonus, we found a way to show our appreciation and admiration of Dr. Byron Blagburn.



Left: NCVP Fall board meeting attendees. First row, left to right: Drs. Jenifer Edmonds (Johnson Research, LLC), Lindsay Starkey (OSU), Matt Brewer (ISU), Doug Carithers (BI), Nicole Szafranski (UT), Wade Burton (IDEXX), Kelly Allen (Merck), Ranju Manoj (CU). Second row, Drs. Sawsan Ammar (WVC), Susan Little (OSU), Mason Reichard (OSU), Gui Verocai (TAMU), Jessica Rodriguez (Zoetis), Sarah Myers (OSU), Katy Martin (ISU), Ruth Scimeca (OSU), Dwight Bowman (CU). Not pictured: Drs. Andrew Peregrine (Guelph), Timi Wu (CU), and Lisa Young (Elanco). Inspiration: Dr. Byron Blagburn (Auburn).

Our welcome event found us decorating cookies with—of course—parasites! Much to our delight and the bakery staff's evident confusion. Meanwhile, back at the board meeting... our NCVP Residents were treated to a special training session on "<u>Personal Branding</u>" from Business Training Works delivered by none other than <u>Mr. Manners</u> himself, Thomas Farley, while the advisory board struggled mightily to make the difficult choices necessary to select funded grants from an all-time record number of stellar applications.



Above: NCVP Board members and residents decorating cookies with some of our favorite parasites.



Above: NCVP Board members serving as panelists at our evening event. Left to right, Drs. Jenifer Edmonds, Jessica Rodriguez, Ruth Scimeca, Doug Carithers, and Mason Reichard.

And on the second evening, **Dr. Lindsay Starkey** moderated a panel discussion aptly titled "Adventures in Parasitology" that allowed NCVP board members to share their career journey, insights, and wisdom about veterinary parasitology to an enthralled (and entertained!) audience of residents, veterinary students, graduate students, faculty members, and fellow board members.

Thanks everyone for all you do to make the parasite dream work!



FALL 2023

People, Parasites, and Publications

Back by popular demand—a list of recent publications from NCVP Residents and Grant Recipients that credit NCVP. Would you like the paper? Feel free to email <u>ncvp@okstate.edu</u> with your request. Enjoy!

- French SK, Kotwa JD, Singh B, Greer T, Pearl DL, Elsemore DA, Hanna R, Jardine CM, Weese JS, Mercer N, Peregrine AS. Factors associated with *Giardia* infection in dogs in southern Ontario, Canada. *Veterinary* Parasitology: Regional Studies and Reports. 2023;41:100870.
- Garrett K, Brown J, Grunert RKA, Hunte J, Ruder MG, Van Why K, Yabsley MJ, **Cleveland CA**. *Echinococcus* infections among wild canids in Pennsylvania, USA. *Journal of Wildlife Disease*. 2023;59(2):332-336.
- Jesudoss Chelladurai JRJ, **Martin KA**, Vardaxis P, Reinemeyer C, Vijayapalani P, Robertson AP, Brewer MT. Repertoire of P-glycoprotein drug transporters in the zoonotic nematode *Toxocara canis. Scientific Reports.* 2023;13(1):4971.
- Kumar S, Prichard RK, **Long T**. Droplet digital PCR as a tool to detect resistant isolates of *Dirofilaria immitis*. *International Journal of Parasitology Drugs and Drug Resistance*. 2023;23:10-18.
- Lejeune M, Mann S, White H, Maguire D, Hazard J, Young R, Stone C, Antczak D, Bowman D. Evaluation of equine fecal egg count tests for accurate monitoring of anthelmintic resistance. Preprint. 10.20944/ preprints202308.0053.v1.
- **Manoj R**. Current perspectives regarding dipylidiasis in companion animals. *Today's Veterinary Practice*. 2023. July/August.
- Polish LB, O'Connell EM, Barth TFE, Gottstein B, Zajac A, Gibson PC, Bah A, Kirchgessner M, Estrada M, Seguin MA, Ramirez-Barrios R. European haplotype of *Echinococcus multilocularis* in the United States. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2022;387(20):1902-1904.
- Stilwell JM, Camus AC, Ware C, Walker CM, Stanton JB, Leary JH, Khoo LH, Wise DJ, Waldbieser GC, Griffin MJ. Influence of channel catfish and channel× blue catfish hybrids on *Myxozoan* community composition in catfish aquaculture ponds. *North American Journal of Aquaculture*. 2023;85(3):241-251.
- Wu T. Toxocara cati infection in cats. Today's Veterinary Practice. 2023. January/February.

About the National Center for Veterinary Parasitology

Veterinary parasites impact human health and society in many ways. With the generous support of our sponsors, the National Center for Veterinary Parasitology works to promote greater understanding and control of parasitic diseases in animals through innovative partnerships between academia and industry. Housed in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Oklahoma State University, the Center strives to create future generations of veterinary parasitologists, conduct targeted research, and provide diagnostic and consulting services worldwide. To learn more, please visit <u>ncvetp.org.</u>

