



# president's COLUMN



## Mentoring our next generation of veterinarians

As veterinarians, we can all identify people who have influenced us professionally. For me personally, those who mentored and inspired me during my early veterinary days truly helped shape the trajectory of my career, and for that I will always be grateful.

Just how important is mentorship to new veterinary graduates? Look no further than the results of an AVMA survey of graduating seniors conducted last year, which found that mentorship was the number one reason veterinary graduates from the Class of 2022 who accepted a job offer chose the one they did. After all, mentors can act as advisers on a wide range of questions and issues that early-career veterinarians may experience. And for both participants, a positive mentor-mentee relationship can provide emotional and career support to increase wellbeing and work satisfaction.

To help make it easier for early-career veterinarians to seek guidance from established peers, the AVMA has partnered with MentorVet to launch MentorVet Connect, a structured mentorship program that connects early-career veterinarians with trained mentors who can offer support and guidance through an established mentoring platform. It is designed to complement in-clinic mentorships when available and offer broader connections that span outside the workplace. The program also offers access to a community of veterinarians at all career stages who have the desire to create a healthier profession for individuals and communities through mentorship.

MentorVet Connect, which launched in May, is free to all participants thanks to support from the AVMA and educational funders Merck Animal Health and Royal Canin. It began pairing mentees and mentors in July; from there, the mentor and mentee will create a customized mentoring plan that best suits the mentee's needs. The entire mentorship relationship takes place remotely, either through digital meeting software or by phone or email. Upon completion of the six-month mentorship period, both mentees and mentors can choose to continue the relationship or pair with new mentees or mentors, allowing for continuous growth and development within the veterinary community.

MentorVet Connect is initially open to 2023 veterinary graduates who were considered members in good standing of their campus SAVMA chapter, but the AVMA expects to expand the program over time. Any AVMA member who is licensed and has at least one year of experience can also apply to serve as a mentor.

A proven mentoring program can provide a solid foundation to help launch a new veterinarian on a path toward success by growing confidence, building new skills, and even reducing exhaustion and burnout. MentorVet Connect is a wonderful example of the AVMA's commitment to addressing the needs of our members at all stages of their careers!

Check it out at [avma.org/Mentor](http://avma.org/Mentor).

**Rena Carlson, DVM**



*I want to hear from you. Please reach out to me with your comments, questions and concerns at [presidentscolumn@avma.org](mailto:presidentscolumn@avma.org).*

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