

Pfizer Animal Health Announces First Recipients of New \$2 Million Veterinary Scholarship Program

Wednesday, May 05, 2010 - 09:30am

Pfizer Partners with American Veterinary Medical Foundation to Offer 222 Scholarships to Decrease Students' Debt Burden

"This scholarship program is a huge investment in the future of veterinary medicine,"

[\(BUSINESS WIRE\)](#)--Pfizer Animal Health announced today the first recipients of a new \$2 million scholarship program for U.S. veterinary students.

The initiative, designed to support the future of the veterinary profession, will provide up to \$2 million in scholarships over its first three years. Administered in partnership with the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF), the program is an opportunity for Pfizer Animal Health to further demonstrate its support of veterinary education, as well as its commitment to encouraging more students to focus on food-animal practice and increasing diversity in the profession.

In the initial year of the program, Pfizer Animal Health has awarded 222 second- and third-year U.S. veterinary students with a total of \$555,000 in scholarships. Scholarship recipients, who hail from 28 U.S. veterinary schools accredited through the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), are from diverse backgrounds, ages, genders, physical disability and ethnicity. Although open to all students, 18 percent represent students from diverse backgrounds, and two-thirds are studying to practice food-animal veterinary medicine.

Scholarship recipients were selected based on several criteria, including academic excellence, leadership, diversity and potential for contributing to food-animal or food-safety veterinary medicine, and will each receive \$2,500 this year.

The scholarship program is part of a broader commitment from Pfizer Animal Health to support the future of the veterinary industry—including scholarships, training and education, and research and development.

"Rising debt, insufficient diversity and fewer practicing or skilled food animal veterinarians in rural America are serious challenges to the veterinary profession," said Michael McFarland, DVM, group director, Veterinary Medical Services & Corporate Citizenship, for Pfizer Animal Health. "As a market leader, we have a responsibility and an obligation to help support the future of the veterinary profession."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture currently projects a shortage of 600 veterinarians and anticipates demand for food-animal veterinarians will increase 12 to 13 percent by 2016. Over the last few years, about 2,600 veterinarians graduate annually from U.S. veterinary schools. The average debt a veterinary student incurs by graduation is approximately \$120,000.

“This scholarship program is a huge investment in the future of veterinary medicine,” says AVMF Executive Director Michael Cathey. “Pfizer has recognized the gaps and has set out to proactively and generously help address them.”

The Pfizer Animal Health Veterinary Student Scholarship Program complements a number of other Pfizer Animal Health programs supporting the veterinary profession, including more than \$15 million invested last year in universities, industry education and training, scholarships, and allied organizations.

“As the global leader in animal health, we’re proud to take the lead in strengthening the long-term viability of the veterinary profession,” said Clint Lewis, president of U.S. Operations for Pfizer Animal Health. “The magnitude of this initiative underscores our level of commitment and dedication to supporting veterinarians, their practices and their profession.”

For more information on the scholarship program, go to www.avmf.org/whatwedo/pfizerscholarship

About Pfizer Animal Health

Pfizer Animal Health, a business of Pfizer Inc., is a world leader in discovering and developing innovative animal vaccines and prescription medicines, investing an estimated \$300 million annually in animal health product research and development. For more information about how Pfizer Animal Health works to ensure a safe, sustainable global food supply from healthy livestock and poultry; or helps companion animals and horses to live longer, healthier lives, visit www.PfizerAH.com.

About AVMF

The American Veterinary Medical Foundation is the charitable arm of the AVMA. For over 40 years, AVMF has been dedicated to protecting and advancing the well being and medical care of animals. Charitable contributions and support to the Foundation help veterinarians help animals. Funding priorities include: Humane Outreach and Animal Welfare, Education and Public Awareness, Student Enhancement, Research Support, and AVMA and its Initiatives. In the last decade, AVMF has awarded grants totaling over \$8,000,000. For more information, visit www.avmf.org.

Media: Lindsay Muller, 410-821-8220 lindsaym@imre.com or Pfizer Rebecca Cisek, 212-733-3657
rebecca.cisek@pfizer.com