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Heading Back to School: Veterinarians Combine Stethoscopes with Microscopes

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New Fellowship Program Partners Nonprofit, Industry and Academia to Provide Solution for Critical Shortage of Animal Health Scientists

(BUSINESS WIRE)--Private practice isn't for everyone, but for graduating veterinary students facing an average of $120,000 in debt, it often is the only logical choice. A new program—the Pfizer Animal Health–Morris ER--Animal Foundation (MAF) Veterinary Fellowship for Advanced Study—gives current practitioners necessary financial support while they pursue a veterinary research career. The program commits a minimum of nearly $1.7 million over four years toward a solution to the growing need for trained veterinary scientists.

"Many practicing veterinarians may wish to become veterinary scientists but can't continue their educational journey due to financial constraints, such as high student debt," said David Haworth, DVM, PhD, director, global alliances for Pfizer Animal Health. "The Pfizer Animal Health–MAF fellowships help these professionals pursue a new career path and provide a unique solution to the critical need for more veterinary scientists."

The recipients of the fellowships are practicing veterinarians returning for a PhD. Each will receive $60,000 per year for four years—provided equally by MAF, Pfizer Animal Health and the student's academic institution—for living expenses and tuition while pursuing advanced veterinary study. Upon receiving their degree, graduates must commit to staying in animal health research for at least four years, where they will help fill a much needed gap in the veterinary medical field.

"New discoveries in animal health—which also may improve human health—will not occur without new scientists seeking solutions," said Patricia N. Olson, DVM, PhD, president/CEO of MAF. "By providing students with a living wage while they pursue advanced scientific training, this fellowship program opens the door to new careers for veterinary professionals and helps ensure the future of veterinary medical advances."

Interviews are available with fellows as well as MAF and Pfizer representatives.

About MAF: Morris Animal Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 1948, is dedicated to funding animal health research that protects, treats and cures companion animals, horses and wildlife. MAF has been at the forefront of funding breakthrough research studies benefiting animals on all seven continents. MAF has its headquarters in Denver. Charity Navigator ranks MAF as a four-star charity, the highest rating. MAF is a BBB Wise Giving Alliance Charity Seal Holder. For more information, call 800.243.2345 or visit MorrisAnimalFoundation.org.

About Pfizer Animal Health: Pfizer Animal Health, one of six business units of Pfizer Inc (NYSE: PFE), is a world leader in discovering and developing innovative animal prescription medicines and vaccines, investing an

estimated $300 million annually. In 2007, Pfizer Animal Health began to expand its focus on pet oncology through a $1.1 million grant to the Morris Animal Foundation in support of an ongoing national canine tumor biospecimen bank. For more information on how Pfizer helps companion animals to live longer, healthier lives, or how Pfizer works to ensure a safe, sustainable global food supply with healthy livestock, visit www.PfizerAH.com.

Heidi Jeter, Director of Marketing & Communications, MAF hjeter@morrisanimalfoundation.org or 303.708.3404 or Rick Goulart, Director of Public Relations, Pfizer Animal Health Rick.Goulart@pfizer.com or 212.733.7457