



I am deeply saddened to share that alumna, dear friend, and former faculty member and Associate Dean, Linda K. Lord, DVM, PhD, passed peacefully this afternoon with friends and her two beloved dogs, Stuie and Newman, at her side, after a courageous battle with cancer.



Dr. Lord earned a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Master's degree in 1999 and her PhD in 2006. She joined the college shortly thereafter as a faculty member in the Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine. Prior to joining the college in 2006, she practiced small animal medicine for five years. Dr. Lord conducted extensive research on companion animal issues, specifically in regard to homeless pets and pet reunification, and she had a strong interest in the health and wellness issues impacting veterinary students.

In 2011, she was appointed Associate Dean of Professional Programs and was responsible for overseeing the curriculum and student affairs and was instrumental in leading the first two National Veterinary Health & Wellness Summits in 2013 and 2014. She also served as an Associate Professor in the department of veterinary preventive medicine and served as the Service Head for the Community Practice, Shelter and Outreach Medicine service prior to being appointed associate dean. Dr. Lord departed the college in February 2017 to join Merck Animal Health's (MAH) Veterinary and Consumer Affairs Team as the Veterinary School and Allied Industry and Liaison Lead, where she was responsible for developing a strategy to promote MAH as a trusted business partner to North American veterinary colleges and other allied industry partners.

During her time at Ohio State, Dr. Lord had a profound effect on student and academic affairs. Many new ideas and initiatives were created under her leadership. She started the custom of hosting recruitment dinners the night before interviews for CVM applicants, created the Student Ambassador Program, and established the Office of Teaching and Learning. Dr. Lord also established the Office of Career Management, which was the first at a college of veterinary medicine with full-time staff devoted to student success and alumni and employer support. She played an integral role in the initial development of the proposal and program for the Building Preeminence in Veterinary General Practice Education program, which is focused on enhancing clinical and professional skills, competencies and confidence of our veterinary graduates to practice broadly across the spectrum of care and to serve a broad socioeconomic array of pet parents.

Dr. Lord co-founded the college's Veterinary Medicine Outreach program in 2009, which initially started with one day per month visiting homebound individuals served by Meals on Wheels through LifeCare Alliance. This program has now grown to provide care to the pets of vulnerable populations of people – homebound, homeless, low income, elders and others – four days a week by partnering with seven Columbus-area

organizations. The purpose of this program is to help maintain the health of these people's pets, which is their lifeline and most stable part of their life or family structure. A faculty veterinarian, veterinary technician and one or more fourth-year veterinary students provide this care where the student serves as the doctor and the faculty member as the coach. This experience is often described by students as the most transformational experience they have had in their education. In addition to the medical education of our students, it raises social awareness, builds cultural competency, and instill civic responsibility.

According to Dr. Mary McLoughlin, faculty member in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, said "Dr. Lord was always kind, humble, passionate and ultimately professional. She poured her passion into everything she did throughout her career. Dr. Lord was the voice and champion of the students working tirelessly for their curriculum, professional program, and career advancement, but most importantly for their individual health and well-being. Her voice and her convictions went far beyond the College of Veterinary Medicine at the Ohio State University and were also heard at our state and national organizations, including the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and beyond. Throughout her career, Dr. Lord never forgot that she was a veterinarian and worked to aid and improve the lives of underserved pets in shelter medicine and outreach. I hold Dr. Lord in the highest esteem as a positive and successful role model for women in veterinary medicine. Linda showed us how to be professionally diverse, successful and highly respected. Dr. Lord can best be described as an outstanding teacher, mentor, colleague, and most importantly, a friend."

Dr. Thomas Wittum, Chair of the Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine and Dr. Lord's graduate advisor and mentor reflected on his nearly 20+ years knowing Linda. He said "Linda just loved animals, and she was committed to helping them to find good homes and having better lives. That's what originally brought her to veterinary medicine, and ultimately back to graduate school. So that she could do more to help them. She loved the students the same way, and always just wanted to help them, and it was hard for her when she could not. From the time she was a student, Linda always wanted to learn more about homeless, lost, and unwanted pets, and to understand how to get them back into good homes. She was the first to ask what happened to unwanted potbellied pigs when they outgrew their homes, and to generate an answer to that question. Her reporting of the first comprehensive and scientifically valid animal shelter population estimates for Ohio, including the shocking euthanasia numbers needed to manage the overwhelming number of unwanted animals, helped to drive the national conversation regarding pet overpopulation. She wanted to know how to get lost pets back to their owners, so she did the research to find out what worked and what didn't. Linda was never afraid to speak her mind, or to challenge dogma, or to take on difficult tasks, and she earned a lot of respect that way."

Dr. Lord received the Ohio State University's Career Services Committee Career Services Award in 2014, which is awarded to a member of the Ohio State community whose position is outside of career services and formal job responsibilities do not

include career advising or counseling yet works with students informally to promote career development, and demonstrates leadership in supporting Career Services programming as a significant campus activity. Dr. Lord served the university in many ways, including as a member of the Committee on Academic Misconduct, which is charged to maintain the academic integrity of the university.

Dr. Lord's impact is felt outside the college and university as well. She chaired the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges Veterinary Wellness Advancement Group, served on the board for the Capital Area Humane Society/Columbus Humane and was a member of the Association of Shelter Veterinarians. She was the past president (2011) of the OVMA, served on its Board of Directors for many years, and was named the OVMA Veterinarian of the Year in 2016.

Dr. Andy McCabe, CEO of the AAVMC and 1985 alumnus of the College, said "Linda was a leader among leaders in academic veterinary medicine. She had a keen and compassionate understanding of veterinary students and the vision to develop programs that simultaneously addressed the needs of the students, the veterinary profession, and the community they serve. Linda elevated the issue of wellbeing in the veterinary profession by advocating for and organizing the first two Veterinary Health and Wellness Summits—the national event continues on as the annual Veterinary Wellbeing Summit. Linda had the foresight to develop our College's Office of Career Management & Professional Development, dedicated solely to the career development of veterinary students, employers, and alumni—a first of its kind within a college of veterinary medicine. Linda generously shared with colleagues, all of her lessons learned, and we are forever grateful for her immense contributions."

Jack Advent, Executive Director of the OVMA shared with me, "Linda was not just an exceptional veterinarian who served the profession in countless ways, she was an exceptional person. She intuitively grasped what was truly important and was not afraid to advocate for the ideas, people and animals she believed in. Linda clearly made a difference as a teacher, a practitioner, a leader and a friend. She will be dearly missed."

Dr. Janet Donlin, CEO of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), shared the following: "Dr. Linda Lord's accomplishments and contributions to veterinary medicine are vast and meaningful. We were fortunate to have collaborated with her in her role with Merck Animal Health and also when she served as the alternate delegate for the AVMA's House of Delegates, as well as many other opportunities throughout her career in veterinary medicine. Many of us were fortunate enough to work with her, be mentored by her and know her as a friend. Linda had a calm grace that touched all. She brought much needed focus and resources to the concept of 'workplace wellbeing' in the veterinary profession, spearheading the Merck Animal Health Veterinary Wellbeing Study that revealed only half of the veterinarians with serious psychological distress are seeking help. Upon seeing the results of that study, Linda worked tirelessly with the AVMA and Merck to see that all veterinarians have access to the AVMA Workplace Wellbeing Certificate program to ensure quality of life for all of her colleagues. The entire veterinary community is indebted to Linda for the progress we've made in this

area. It is with solemn sadness that we acknowledge her passing, with deep gratitude that we recognize her contributions, and with great respect that we honor her life.”

Dr. Karla Zadnik, Dean of the Ohio State College of Optometry and friend, colleague and mentor, said when she learned of Linda’s passing “the poem ‘When Great Trees Fall’ by Maya Angelou, immediately came to mind.”

*When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down
in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.*

*When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses
eroded beyond fear.*

*When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words
unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.*

*Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed*

*and informed by their
radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of
dark, cold
caves.*

*And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.*

Having known Linda personally and professionally for over twelve years, I can attest that she has had an indelible impact on the college and veterinary profession through her passion, integrity, role modeling, conviction, and visionary leadership. Her legacy will live on through the people and programs she touched and inspired. She will be dearly missed by all who knew her and her passing leaves a hole in our hearts.

Memorial plans will be forthcoming once those are finalized.

Respectfully,

Rustin