

## College of Veterinary Medicine Strengthens Ties with Linkage Partner in India

Fourteen faculty and staff members from MSU's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) traveled to Chennai, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, during summer 2006, accompanied by Mary Anne Walker, managing director of the MSU Office of International Development.

The occasion was a five-day international symposium, "Advanced Veterinary Practice in Medicine and Surgery – Augmenting Health and Production," a collaborative effort of CVM and Madras Veterinary College at Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS). The symposium was also supported by MSU's International Studies and Programs and the Office of International Development. The conference took place June 21–25 and included more than 25 paper presentations and 200 poster presentations, mostly by participants from Indian universities. According to CVM's P.S. MohanKumar, "The response to this conference was overwhelming. More than 1,000 delegates attended the conference. There were participants from five different countries."

The MSU-TANUVAS collaboration began six years ago. On the MSU side, it has been facilitated by P.S. MohanKumar and his wife, Sheba MohanKumar, also in CVM; Janver Krehbiel, CVM director of international programs; and Hilda Mejia Abreu, CVM director of student admissions. A recently signed linkage agreement between the two institutions provides for training students and faculty in teaching, research, and clinical activities. According to Walker, "MSU and TANUVAS are seamlessly exchanging scholars, students, and building joint research programs."

One tangible result of the expanding MSU-TANUVAS relationship is a successful summer study abroad program that has sent more than 40 MSU veterinary students to TANUVAS since it was inaugurated in 2003. Participants receive intensive training in tropical veterinary medicine and have the opportunity to work with Indian veterinarians at a wildlife sanctuary. In fact, three of the MSU veterinary faculty members who attended the 2006 conference were able to connect up with the MSU students already in India for that study abroad program.



Above: Patrick LeBlanc, director of MSU's Veterinary Teaching Hospital, talks with a TANUVAS faculty colleague at the symposium poster session.

They all spent a few days at the Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, home to many animal species, including a large population of Asian elephants.

But MSU also draws students from TANUVAS, MohanKumar reports. "In the last four years, six Ph.D. students have been recruited from this institution to be part of CVM's college-wide Comparative Medicine & Integrative Biology program and are doing very well."

MohanKumar also reports that last summer he and his wife received 33 computers from Sparrow Medical Center, which were shipped to TANUVAS with the help of CVM colleague George Bohart. "These computers are actively used by students and faculty alike at the TANUVAS campus right now," he said. "We are in the process of collecting more computers to be shipped in the future." Donated textbooks have also been delivered during the last four study abroad trips.

TANUVAS is one of two universities in Tamil Nadu with which MSU has a strong linkage history, OID's Walker pointed out. "Our College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has also enjoyed a longstanding relationship with partners at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University who are engaged in issues related to food production, packaging, distribution, biotechnology, sustainability, and enhancement of quality, grades, and standards."

— Jay Rodman