

# NEWS

FROM THE FOUNDATION FOR THE HORSE

## Foundation closing in on \$10 million campaign goal

Since announcing the public phase of our three-year, \$10 million “Taking the Lead” comprehensive campaign last December, gifts and confirmed commitments to The Foundation have grown from \$6.7 million to nearly \$8.3 million. Time, however, is running short as the campaign concludes Dec. 31, 2022.

“This campaign is about doing more for the horse,” said Campaign Cabinet Chair Dr. Monty McInturff. “It is about securing the future: a future with more relief for horses at risk of abandonment or neglect; a future with more re-



First responders learn equine rescue techniques at emergency training hosted by the Kentucky Horse Council and funded in part by a grant from The Foundation.

sources to help horses in the wake of natural disasters; a future with more innovation and research discovery in pursuit of treatments and cures; and a future in which more students pursue and stay active in equine veterinary medicine.”

A secondary campaign goal is to welcome 1,000 first-time donors into the fold. To date, 827 new donors have supported our mission.

Helping promote The Foundation brand have been the Proud Supporter program, which provides supporters with a Foundation logo for display and materials to support their advocacy; and a series of horse show sponsorships through which we’ve connected directly with horse owners, trainers, breeders, and horse enthusiasts.

Is there a show or event at which you would like The Foundation to be represented? Whether hosting a private reception, helping to secure an in-kind or discounted

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## The Foundation, BEVA partner on Ukraine equine relief

### Initial \$50,000 donation kicks off joint effort

The Foundation for the Horse in mid-April awarded \$50,000 to help horses in Ukraine and neighboring countries. The aid came from individual donors who responded generously to The Foundation’s appeal for assistance in March as well as a matching donation by The Foundation.

The funds were distributed through The Foundation’s partnership with the British Equine Veterinary Association and its charitable arm BEVA Trust. The groups are collaborating on equine relief efforts in and around Ukraine with two additional organizations: British Vet Professionals for Ukraine and British Equestrians for Ukraine.

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Courtesy of BEVA

A pony in poor condition is reunited with its owner in Poland after five weeks apart and 23 hours in transit from Dnipro, Ukraine.

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## Taking the Lead

Learn about the campaign  
at [foundationforthehorse.org/  
support/new-lp](http://foundationforthehorse.org/support/new-lp).

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## Ukraine equine relief

The goal of this partnership and initial \$50,000 gift is to support the veterinary and equestrian communities that have “boots on the ground” and are making an immediate impact for all horses and working equids in Ukraine and in neighboring countries to which animals have been evacuated, including Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova.

Courtesy of BEVA



A horse impacted by the war in Ukraine receives vital fluids.

The Foundation remains actively involved in helping coordinate and assist the international response as the situation on the ground changes. By early May, approximately 3,000 horses in 150 stables inside Ukraine had received feed and bedding. In addition, donations of medicine and equipment to veterinarians in Ukraine was ongoing with treatment of war wounds and colic most pressing. Hoof and dental care are likely to emerge as important welfare considerations going forward.

To make a disaster gift in support of this combined effort to help horses in Ukraine, visit [foundationforthehorse.org/give-now](http://foundationforthehorse.org/give-now).

## Foundation feeds horses affected by New Mexico wildfires

The worst of times brings out the best in horse people and The Foundation. In this case, the combined Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak Fire in New Mexico, which started April 19, had burned more than 160,000 acres by early May and remained only 20% contained. The fire had affected hundreds of horses and thousands of cattle and other livestock.

To provide immediate aid in support of the state's horses and horse people, The Foundation purchased 65 3x3x8 bales of hay for \$4,550 and coordinated delivery to the Sapello, N.M., practice of AAEP member Dr. Bill Brainerd, who generously paid the delivery fee out of his own pocket. With the help and coordination by Dr. Brainerd, Dr. Ashleigh Olds-Sanchez of Las Vegas, N.M., and The New Mexico Livestock Board, bales were distributed to equine properties in need.



A farm owner from Rociada, N.M., secures several bales of hay from Dr. Brainerd's practice prior to his trip home.

To make a gift to The Foundation in support of disaster relief, simply earmark the gift to “disaster relief.”

# The Foundation helping improve the lives of donkeys in Namibia

Donkey health and well-being impacts human well-being in the southwest African country of Namibia. With a mission and plan to improve on the ill-fitting harnesses causing open sores and other injuries to the nation's donkeys, the Namibian Animal Welfare Association (NAWA) in 2021 launched Project Donkey Harness.

The well-intentioned initiative, however, quickly became imperiled due to COVID challenges and then by competition for and unavailability of needed materials. In the words of NAWA vice chairperson and Project Donkey Harness leader Yvonne Le Roux, "Change your plan, but never your goal."

With a financial assist from The Foundation for the Horse, the NAWA team

started from scratch with a new design requiring different materials, a new supplier, modified buckle design, and different machinery. Donkey Harness design 2.0 is made with a soft and comfortable 90mm-wide nylon webbing that has proven durable, humane, and better suited to the nation's harsh and hot climate.

In addition to helping fund harness making, The Foundation grant has supported NAWA's veterinary outreach to remote areas of the country where donkeys and other working equids are often injured and in poor condition. This included five days in February in northern Namibia and five days in late March in northeastern parts of the country. Between the two trips, the team administered care to nearly 150 donkeys and



*A donkey shows the wounds from an ill-fitting harness.*

working equids, and provided 80 new humane harnesses, 133 humane bridles, 122 humane bits, as well as education to caretakers.

Among the many appreciative caretakers was Thomas from the village of Kamanjab. "Thank you so much to the team for fitting new harnesses and bridles," he said. "The donkeys are doing well in them, and we are grateful that you came to see us, teach us, and care about our animals and our community."

Additional NAWA outreach trips enabled by Foundation funds are scheduled for the coming months.



*Donkeys wearing new humane harnesses enabled in part by a grant from The Foundation.*

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## \$10 million campaign goal

sponsorship on behalf of The Foundation, or working with an event or show you are involved with to make The Foundation its beneficiary, your assistance is appreciated.

The campaign regional co-chairs are also busy on behalf of The Foundation in their own communities. Some are sending letters introducing The Foundation to key clients. Others have hosted parties in their home or clinic.

Watch a brief campaign video at [foundationforthehorse.org/support/new-lp](https://foundationforthehorse.org/support/new-lp). While there, you may decide to join us in

"Taking the Lead" by making an online gift. For additional information, contact Paul Ransdell, Ed.D, at (859) 705-0430 or [pransdell@foundationforthehorse.org](mailto:pransdell@foundationforthehorse.org).

### Campaign Cabinet of Volunteers

Dr. Monty McInturff (Chair)	Jeannie Jeffery
John Chalk	Dr. Margo Macpherson
Dr. Doug Corey	Dr. Rick Mitchell
Dr. Rob Franklin	Melanie S. Taylor
Sarah Ingram	

# Scholarships help new horse doctor aim high

At the AAEP's 67th Annual Convention in December 2021, 14 veterinary students shared in scholarship proceeds of \$355,000 from The Foundation and its scholarship program partners Coyote Rock Ranch, Merck Animal Health, and Zoetis Foundation.

John Joyner/NC State Veterinary Medicine



Dr. Alex Grobman

Among the beneficiaries was Alex Grobman, who just graduated in May with her veterinary degree from North Carolina State University. She not only received one of four \$75,000 Coyote Rock Ranch Veterinary Scholarships but also the inaugural \$5,000 Dr. Bill Rood Leadership Scholarship, an endowed scholarship established by friends, colleagues, and clients of the retired co-founder of Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, Ky.

We recently caught up with now Dr. Grobman to discuss her future plans and the impact of her Foundation scholarships.

## **Q: Congratulations on receiving your doctorate. Where will you be starting your career?**

**A:** Thank you! I'll be starting an equine rotating internship in Florida at the Equine Medical Center of Ocala in June.

## **Q: What particular skills are you looking to develop or what goals do you have for your internship?**

**A:** Although I have a primary interest in surgery, I'm interested in having the opportunity to build my entire clinical repertoire. I want to be a well-rounded equine veterinarian and develop my skill set in multiple areas. My specific goals are to build my comfort with clinical reasoning, expand my list of differentials, and develop an in-depth understanding of surgical procedures.

## **Q: What are your current plans post-internship?**

**A:** Currently, my plan is to pursue a surgical residency after my internship. Also, at some point in the near future, I would be interested in honing in on specific research skills via a post-doctorate program, like a Ph.D. or Masters.

## **Q: How about your long-term career goals?**

**A:** I'm interested in an academic career with multiple moving parts that includes surgery, clinical research, and teaching. I would be thrilled with the opportunity to learn as much as I can in my career, and then give back to the veterinary community by teaching students and new graduates.

## **Q: Veterinary school is a significant financial commitment. Can you talk about the scholarships' impact on your career as a horse doctor?**

**A:** It's no surprise that veterinary school and specialty training don't provide a booming salary; we are literally paid in knowledge! I think this especially applies to those in the equine field. With my incredible scholarships from Coyote Rock Ranch and from The Foundation in the name of Dr. Bill Rood, I have an enormous financial weight lifted off my shoulders. I feel lucky that I'm now able to give 100% of myself to my patients and clients, without the added burden of student loan debt.

## **Q: Your accomplished leadership in your school and AAEP student chapter was an important consideration in awarding the Dr. Bill Rood Leadership Scholarship. Do you envision pursuing similar leadership opportunities as your career develops?**

**A:** I would love to continue my involvement with AAEP leadership as a new graduate and down the line as a clinician. I think the AAEP is a fantastic avenue for learning new techniques, sharing ideas, and communicating with those who have been in the field for many years. Also, I look forward to collaborating with others in an effort to promote mental/physical health and wellness, work/life balance, and other important aspects of self-preservation in equine medicine.

## **Q: Less than 2% of veterinary school students currently pursue equine practice. What message or advice would you have for new or aspiring veterinary school students concerning pursuit of an equine path?**

**A:** Unfortunately, equine medicine has developed a negative stigma that is now deeply ingrained: "You have to be a special type of gritty and unrealistically hard-working individual to make it." I think it's important to share that equine medicine is changing for the better: improved salaries, mental health initiatives, and safe spaces to admit burnout, just to name a few. Equine practitioners are a resilient, resourceful, capable cohort of doctors that I feel lucky to be a part of. Don't give up on your dream of working with horses. Don't listen to those who try to steer you in a different direction. Forge ahead on your path and remember that you have a huge team of support behind you, and we are cheering you on every step of the way!



# Vet Direct funds help save Kentucky donkey attacked by dogs

## The Foundation-AAEP-ASPCA partnership enables care when funds run low

Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, Ky., had only been a part of the Vet Direct Safety Net program for a few weeks in early 2022 when a call came in about a donkey that needed immediate help.

Dr. David Alexander, a second-year intern with the hospital, headed out to see how he could help. When he arrived, he found a Miniature Mediterranean Donkey named “Perk” had been attacked by a pack of dogs, receiving significant trauma and puncture wounds to his inguinal area and scrotum.

“He was missing part of his scrotum and was presenting with an exposed testicle,” Dr. Alexander said.

In order to save Perk, Dr. Alexander performed a castration with scrotal ablation and flushed all of his puncture and bite wounds. “The donkey would have likely had to have been euthanized without the help from this program,” he said. Instead, Perk is healing well and doing great, he reports.

Designed to reduce the number of horses relinquished to rescues or sent to auction, the Vet Direct program reimburses veterinarians up to \$600 per horse when services are rendered for emergency stabilization procedures,

euthanasia or disposal to owners who are unable to pay for them.

Dr. Alexander and a few of his Rood & Riddle colleagues were onboarded in a group, and information on the program was disseminated to all of the more than 60 vets across the practice’s three divisions in Lexington, Ky., Saratoga Springs, N.Y., and Wellington, Fla.

Dr. Alexander encourages AAEP-member veterinarians to get onboarded into the program even if they don’t have a client who comes to mind immediately who may be able to use it. Enrollment is as easy as filling out the initial form and online questionnaire. “This is a great program that has been super helpful, and I’ve been able to use it twice,” he said. “You never know when you’ll need it!”

In addition to assisting equine owners, the Vet Direct program eases the minds of veterinarians, allowing them to care for horses in immediate need without the stress of offering free services.

“It’s a great option for us to provide care to patients where the only barrier we face is the owner’s financial constraints,” Dr. Alexander said. “It’s very challenging to have the knowledge to help and treat patients, but not be able to [do so]



*Dr. David Alexander with a donkey patient.*

due to the owner’s financial constraints. This program alleviates that.”

If you are an AAEP-member veterinarian in the U.S. with clients who potentially could struggle to pay for veterinary care, put yourself in a position to help by enrolling in Vet Direct Safety Net. If you are a horse owner or enthusiast and know someone who could use a little help to care for their horse so they may keep it, please connect them with an AAEP member. Sign up or learn more at [aaep.org/horse-owners/vet-direct-safety-net](https://aaep.org/horse-owners/vet-direct-safety-net) or contacting Sue Stivers at [sstivers@aaep.org](mailto:ssstivers@aaep.org).

## Practice makes perfect

After a more than two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, Foundation-supported Essential Skills Workshops returned to campuses across the U.S. this spring, including here at the University of Georgia. Under the direction of AAEP-member experts in the fields of dentistry and podiatry, AAEP student chapter members equipped with power floats or with nippers and rasps fine-tune and elevate important skills they’ll need to maintain the health and well-being of client horses when entering practice.



## Donor spotlight: Duncan Alexander

**Longtime supporter's recent gift, commitment help secure better future for horses**

With a deep-rooted commitment to the mission of horse welfare, Duncan Alexander further championed the cause with his recent \$100,000 gift to the Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) and substantial planned gift commitment to support The Foundation's Campaign for the Horse.

Mr. Alexander has been a dedicated supporter of The Foundation since its inception in 1994. He was instrumental in creation of The Foundation's first scholarship awards for equine veterinary students through the AAEP and American Live Stock Insurance, where he served as president for over 25 years. Thanks to his vision and advocacy, 220 scholarships have been awarded to future horse doctors in the ensuing two-plus decades.

"Duncan has been such an important friend and ambassador for The Foundation for decades," said Dr. Rick Mitchell, Foundation Development Council chair. "His vision and investment will continue to help us with disease mitigation and education through the disease center, and his planned gift commitment demonstrates his long-term dedication to the mission of improving the well-being of horses through The Foundation."



*Duncan Alexander, far right, presents a \$250,000 matching gift to representatives of The Foundation's predecessor from Hiscox Insurance, which acquired American Live Stock Insurance in 2009. (AAEP archive photo)*

Mr. Alexander has been a leader in the business community with a history of philanthropic giving. He served on The Foundation's advisory council, previously the AAEP Foundation, from 2004–2015; was the second non-veterinarian to serve on the AAEP board of directors, from 2001–2004; and received the 1997 AAEP George Stubbs Award.

## Tennessee Equine Hospital establishes named endowment

The partners at Tennessee Equine Hospital in Thompson's Station, Tenn., have made a campaign pledge of \$100,000 to establish the Tennessee Equine Hospital (TEH) Endowment. The endowment and its annual proceeds will go to support each of The Foundation's mission areas of Research, Scholarships, and Horses at Risk while helping grow the overall endowment for the future.

The pledge by Drs. Monty McInturff, Matt Povlovich, Matthew DeLisle, David Dunlap, and Matt Lovell has been amplified by TEH clients, one of whom made a \$100,000 gift to this endowment to support the Campaign for the Horse.

"Our practice, partners, employees, and clients all believe in the future of the horse, and the excellent work The Foundation is doing for the horse brings joy



to our hearts," said Dr. McInturff. "Setting up this endowment for perpetuity has been easy, and I encourage others to consider this opportunity to help The Foundation secure its future for the horse."

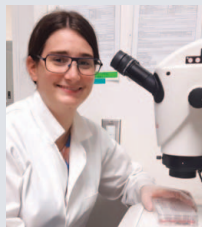
TEH and its partners and employees have long supported The Foundation, including as host of the 2020 Virtual Barn Parties that raised funds during the height of the pandemic. TEH is full-

service hospital with a team of 18 full-time veterinarians operating out of four locations, servicing clients and their horses in West, Middle and Northern Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Southern Kentucky.

To learn more about setting up a named endowment, scholarship or more, contact Paul Ransdell, Ed.D., at [pransdell@foundationforthehorse.org](mailto:pransdell@foundationforthehorse.org) or (859) 233-0147.

# Investing in clinical advances and promising researchers

Nurturing the careers of brilliant young scientists while advancing prospects for scientific breakthrough to unsolved medical questions, The Foundation during its current funding cycle has awarded \$131,717 for seven exceptional equine research projects being investigated by the AAEP-member graduate students, residents, or postdoctoral fellows presented below. Since inception of this program in 2019, The Foundation has provided \$326,398 in support of impactful research by up-and-coming investigators.



## Elucidating host-pathogen interactions during equine placentitis

*Dr. Machteld van Heule,  
University of California, Davis*

Generating data that enables identification of important placental genes and pathways involved in survival and pathogenesis of the pathogen and the host immune response will allow for improved treatment of placentitis and identification of new biomarkers that can facilitate an early diagnosis.



## Equine placenta in lab: Development of equine placental organoid

*Dr. Margo Verstraete,  
University of California, Davis*

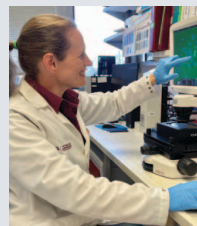
Establishing a protocol to generate equine trophoblast organoids from fresh post-partum placental samples for use as in vitro models to study placental development and its associated pathologies.



## Validation of chorionic girdle organoid culture as an invitro source of equine chorionic gonadotropin

*Dr. Riley Thompson,  
Colorado State University*

Providing the first long-term, physiologically representative in vitro model of the equine chorionic gonadotropin will be pivotal for studying regulation of trophoblast differentiation and early pregnancy maintenance in the mare while also yielding the potential for large-scale in vitro production of eCG.



## An mRNA Vaccine to Immunize Foals Against *Rhodococcus equi*

*Dr. Rebecca Legere,  
Texas A&M University*

Identifying a construct of in vitro-transcribed mRNA encoding virulence-associated protein A that yields strong protein expression and secretion in vitro, and demonstrating that nebulized IVT mRNA encoding VapA produces significantly greater antibody activity and cell-mediated immune responses than does intramuscular immunization with adjuvanted, purified VapA protein, will provide compelling evidence to evaluate the nebulized IVT mRNA VapA vaccine to protect foals against infection with *R. equi*.



## Investigation of genetic component of pergolide efficacy & adverse effects in horses undergoing treatment for pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID)

*Dr. Lauren Hughes,  
University of Minnesota*

Establishing which putative alleles involved in the selected candidate genes are associated with adverse effects or varying efficacy of pergolide therapy may increase veterinarians' ability to appropriately treat this condition while expanding current knowledge on pathophysiology of PPID.



## Direct and indirect effects of platelet rich plasma on neutrophil stimulation

*Dr. Sarah Kooy,  
Auburn University*

Observing differences in neutrophil proliferation and function with direct and indirect treatment of PRP will likely further strengthen the need for practitioners to use pure (leukocyte reduced) PRP for enhanced repair of musculoskeletal injuries, which is important to minimize reinjury and protect continued athletic performance.

Dr. Kooy's project is supported by a gift from the Thoroughbred Education and Research Foundation, whose mission is to make racing safer through research and education. This is the second consecutive year that TERF has partnered with The Foundation for the Horse on important research with potential to impact the health and safety of Thoroughbred athletes.



## Evaluation of persistence of chondrocytes or mesenchymal stromal cells after intra-articular injection

*Dr. Bethany Liebig,  
Colorado State University*

Determining whether culture-expanded chondrocytes will remain viable in the joint significantly longer than MSCs after intra-articular injection as measured through IVIS imaging could improve upon the use of MSCs to treat osteoarthritis.



TERF

Thoroughbred Education and Research Foundation



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## EDCC receives federal biosecurity grant

The Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC), working with the AAEP and funded through The Foundation for the Horse, has been awarded a cooperative agreement from USDA-APHIS National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program (NADPRP) for \$176,960 to increase awareness of biosecurity and help prevent the spread of infectious diseases in horses.

The EDCC is an industry-funded hub for infectious disease communication. Its dissemination of accurate and timely information during the recent EHV-1 outbreaks in California underscores the EDCC's continued critical role in keeping horses safe and their connections informed.

With the NADPRP support, the EDCC will develop tools to improve disease recognition and practical biosecurity while communicating the importance of biosecurity to all horse industry constituents. This will include creation of user-friendly biosecurity information and procedures for distribution throughout the horse community using media and the network of horse organizations and allies in the industry. The EDCC will also provide ongoing sources of continuing education for distribution by veterinarians to their clients.



Dr. Nat White

“This is the first NADPRP grant awarded for an equine-focused project,” said Kentucky State Veterinarian Dr. Katie Flynn. “This is exciting news for the equine industry as the funding will dedicate resources to advancing biosecurity within the equine community. Promoting everyday biosecurity will have significant benefit to the health and welfare of our horses as well as ensuring the economic health of the industry.”

Visit [equinediseasecc.org](http://equinediseasecc.org) to learn more or to support the EDCC; or contact Katie McDaniel, EDCC communication manager, at (859) 233-3322 or [kmcdaniel@aaep.org](mailto:kmcdaniel@aaep.org).