

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Advancing Veterinary Education Together



In a year of challenges and opportunity, we have endured and advanced, to drive our profession into the future. The academic veterinary community has demonstrated the ability to be agile and resilient.

At Catalyze 2025, I challenged academic veterinary leaders to be stewards of knowledge, veterinary workforce, and innovation. Those principles have guided board decisions and new initiatives this year.

The numbers tell part of our story: nearly 200 advocacy meetings on Capitol Hill, more than 12,000 veterinary program applicants, and millions of dollars in scholarships to reduce educational debt. This year, we affirmed the core values that define academic veterinary medicine. Our endorsement of the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom was a clear declaration that open inquiry, intellectual freedom, and evidence-based teaching remain nonnegotiable pillars of our mission.

We also expanded our reach and impact. The launch of the Competency-Based Veterinary Education—Nursing Model established a groundbreaking framework for veterinary nursing and technology programs. The Spectrum of Care Implementation Guide equips educators to prepare students for varied practice settings. And our partnership

with Chewy Health to create the Veterinary Leaders Program reflects our commitment to a profession that mirrors the communities we serve. We worked to find solutions and guidelines for the challenges associated with remote learning, 2+2 programs, AI in veterinary education, and third-party ranking of veterinary colleges. We will continue to address these challenges under the leadership of Emma Read, our newly appointed CEO.

Throughout this remarkable year, I have been honored to serve as AAVMC President and Board Chair alongside extraordinary leaders in academic veterinary medicine. I am grateful for the dedicated service of Ted Mashima; Lisa Greenhill; and Dotty Gray during periods of short staffing. I extend my gratitude to our Board of Directors, deans, faculty, committee members, volunteers, and staff for their support and insight.

Like 2025, some of the 2026 challenges are easily predicted, while others will take us all by surprise. We are equipped to address all challenges on the horizon. Together, we are not just educating the next generation; we are co-creating the future of the profession.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bonnie R. Rush".

Bonnie R. Rush
President and Board Chair