

A group of five diverse professionals are posed together in a modern office environment. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair and glasses is seated, smiling. Behind her, a man in a dark t-shirt stands with his arm around a man in a grey sweater. To the right, a man with glasses and a beard is seated, and another woman with glasses is seated to his right. The background shows office windows and a blurred interior.

The Year in Review



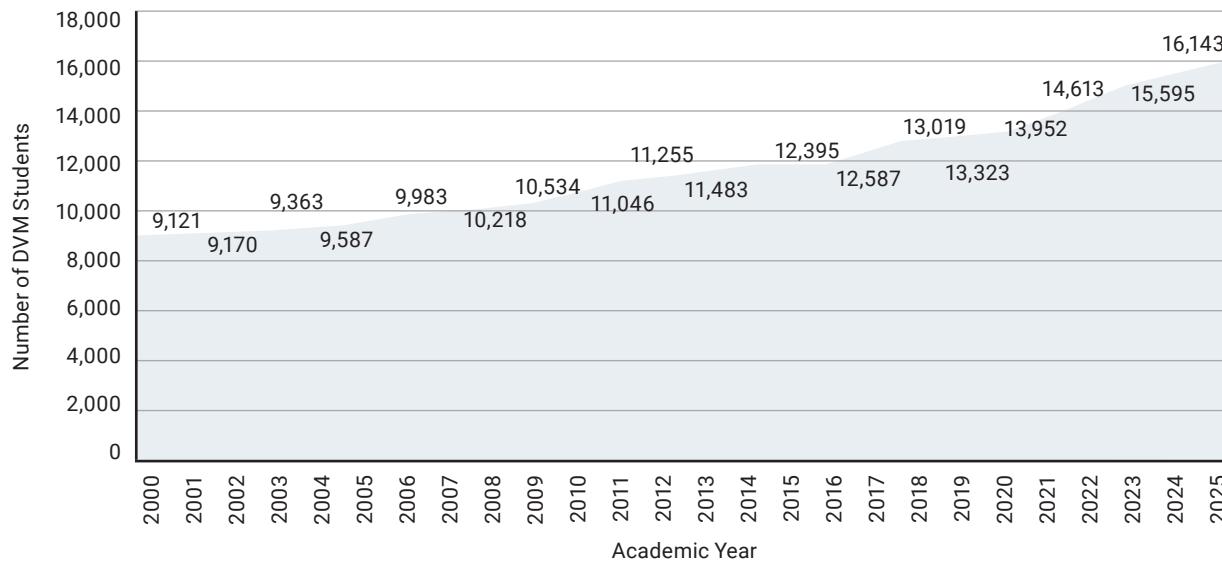
As we reflect on 2025, veterinary education in the U.S. continued to demonstrate growth and resilience.

Total DVM student enrollment reached a record high of more than 16,000, marking a steady upward trajectory over the past two decades. At the same time, first-year enrollment and applicant-to-seat ratios underscore the increasing competitiveness of admissions, with more aspiring veterinarians seeking entry into limited programs.

These enrollment and admissions patterns provide the foundation for the achievements highlighted throughout this report.

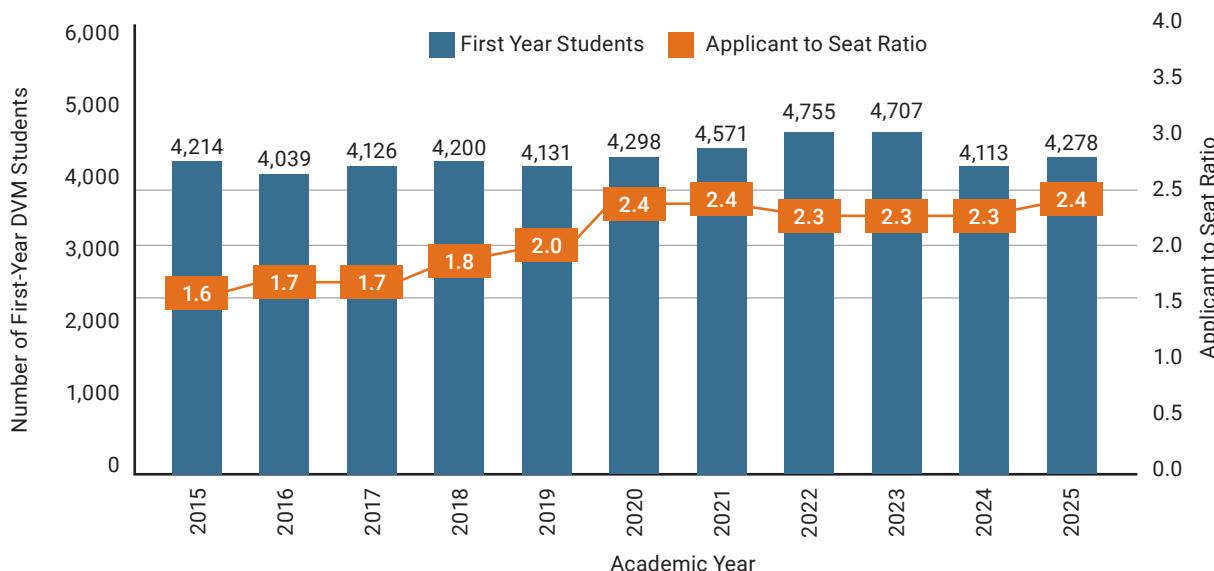
DVM Student Enrollment at U.S. Colleges of Veterinary Medicine

AAVMC Internal Data Reports 2000–2025



First-Year DVM Student Enrollment and Applicant to Seat Ratio at U.S. Colleges of Veterinary Medicine

AAVMC Internal Data Reports 2000–2025



Grants, Scholarships, and Awards: Investing in Tomorrow

This year, AAVMC distributed substantial funding to support research, student success, and diversity in veterinary medicine. From research grants advancing educational innovation to scholarships removing financial barriers for talented students, these investments represent our commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive profession.

Grants

CIVME Research Grant

In support of its mission to foster international collaboration and evidence-based improvements in veterinary education, the Council for International Veterinary Medical Education (CIVME) awarded research grants to three pioneering recipients who will advance veterinary education globally:

Jenny-Ann Toribio, University of Sydney

Project: Determination of epidemiology competencies for student veterinarians at point of first registration to practice

Carolina Sánchez, Universidad Andrés Bello

Project: Discovering and scoring clinical skills for exotic animal veterinary graduates by relevance in practice

Michelle McArthur, University of Adelaide

Project: An international collaboration for consensus and guidance on wellbeing in veterinary education

Student Fellowships and Scholarships

With support from our generous sponsors and collaboration with our partner organizations, AAVMC's fellowships and scholarships continued to support the future of an inclusive community in veterinary medicine.



Chewy Veterinary Leaders Program

In partnership with Chewy Health, AAVMC awarded \$20,000 scholarships to 15 second-year veterinary students from underserved

communities. This program offers more than financial support—it is a comprehensive leadership development initiative that includes peer support sessions, leadership training at Chewy's headquarters, and post-graduation enrollment in an early-career mentorship program.



Merck Animal Health and Patricia M. Lowrie Diversity Leadership Scholarships

The Merck Animal Health Diversity Leadership Scholarship recognized 16 students who actively contributed to enhancing diversity and inclusion at AAVMC member institutions. These scholarships, totaling \$160,000, celebrated students who

"I am truly honored to be awarded both the Merck Animal Health Diversity Leadership Scholarship and the Patricia M. Lowrie Diversity Leadership Scholarship. These recognitions deepen my sense of fulfillment for the work I have done so far, and they further fuel my passion to continue advocating for a more inclusive environment within the veterinary field."



— Sergio Acuna, Patricia M. Lowrie Diversity Leadership Scholarship Recipient

don't just benefit from diverse communities—they build them.

From these exceptional recipients, Sergio Acuna of Cornell University was selected as the Patricia M. Lowrie Diversity Leadership Scholarship winner, receiving an additional \$6,000 for a total of \$16,000 in scholarship support.

zoetis foundation

The Zoetis Foundation/AAVMC Veterinary Student Scholarship

During the 2025 SAVMA Conference, 263 second- and third-year veterinary students from AAVMC U.S. and Caribbean member institutions each received \$7,000 scholarships—representing more than \$1.8 million in direct support. These scholarships help offset the rising costs of veterinary education and allow students to focus on learning rather than financial stress.

Dr. Catherine A. Knupp Scholarship, Sponsored by The Zoetis Foundation

The prestigious Dr. Catherine A. Knupp Scholarship, which is sponsored by The

Zoetis Foundation, recognizes students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement and commitment to advancing the profession.

Ryan Carson at Oklahoma State University and Haeree Lang at the University of Minnesota each received \$25,000 awards to help alleviate educational debt and support their continued journeys in veterinary medicine and research.



FFAR Veterinary Student Research Fellowship

AAVMC and the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR) selected 15 outstanding students for the 2025 FFAR Veterinary Student Research Fellowship. This 12-month fellowship provides hands-on research experience in critical areas of food security, animal agriculture, and public health—preparing students for careers that will shape how we feed a growing global population sustainably and ethically.

AAVMC Awards: Celebrating Excellence

AAVMC's awards honor individuals whose contributions have fundamentally shaped veterinary education, research, and service. Their work exemplifies the values that define our profession: excellence, innovation, dedication, and impact.



Excellence in Research Award
Herman Barkema,
University of Calgary



Distinguished Teacher Award, presented by Zoetis
Dean A. Hendrickson,
Colorado State University



Billy E. Hooper Award for Distinguished Service
Oscar Fletcher Jr.,
North Carolina State University



Iverson Bell Award
Susan Williams,
University of Georgia

Admissions and Recruitment: Demand Remains Strong

This year, AAVMC continued to advance its mission of connecting aspiring veterinarians with educational opportunities and supporting a diverse pipeline of future professionals. Through the Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS), the Merck Animal Health Applicant Fee Assistance Program, and the AAVMC Pre-Vet Career Fair, more students than ever were able to explore, apply to, and engage with veterinary programs. These initiatives not only help to remove barriers to entry but also inspire and guide the next generation of veterinary leaders.

Veterinary Medical College Application Service

VMCAS 2026 Cycle at a Glance

7% increase

in applicants (13,174 total)

10.7% rise in applications submitted (80,028 total)

Average of **6.07** applications per applicant

The Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS) 2026 cycle, which took place during calendar year 2025, experienced another year of robust growth. With the addition of Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine of Rowan University and Utah State University, VMCAS now serves an expanding network of veterinary programs across North America and the Caribbean, and internationally.

The sustained high volume of applicants reflects several positive trends: growing public awareness of veterinary medicine's diverse career paths, increased visibility of veterinary professionals during public health crises, and successful outreach efforts by AAVMC member institutions.

Merck Animal Health Applicant Fee Assistance Program

The Merck Animal Health Applicant Fee Assistance Program removes financial barriers for qualified applicants by waiving one additional designation fee through VMCAS. The program targets students from groups underrepresented in veterinary medicine, first-generation college students, and Pell Grant-eligible students.

For the VMCAS 2026 cycle, 379 applicants received fee assistance, enabling them to apply to one additional program that might have otherwise been financially out of reach. This seemingly small intervention can be life changing, opening doors to programs where students ultimately thrive.

AAVMC Pre-Vet Career Fair

The AAVMC Pre-Vet Career Fair capped off Catalyze 2025 on April 12 with energy, inspiration, and meaningful connections. More than 130 prospective veterinary students met with representatives from AAVMC member institutions, attended information sessions, and gained insights into various career paths within the profession.

Keynote speaker Michelle Schack captivated attendees with her presentation, "It All Started With a Cow—An Unconventional Path to a Purpose-Driven Vet Life." Her personal journey—from rural roots to a multifaceted



Michelle Schack emphasized the many paths to a veterinary career at the Pre-Vet Career Fair.

veterinary career—reminded students that there is no single path to becoming a veterinarian, and that authenticity and passion matter more than following a prescribed trajectory.

Advocacy: Protecting Research, Supporting Rural Practice, Advancing Animal Welfare

In an era of rapid political change, AAVMC's advocacy work is more critical than ever—protecting federal research funding, supporting international students and scholars, and defending the autonomy of academic institutions.

Response to Executive Orders

Following the January 2025 inauguration, AAVMC closely monitored executive orders and policy shifts, then took proactive steps to support member institutions. These efforts included hosting members-only webinars on key topics, issuing timely statements, and providing expert analyses on emerging policy issues affecting veterinary education and research.

Advocacy Day 2025

Advocacy Day 2025 brought together more than 130 participants for nearly 200 meetings with legislators and staff—our highest engagement to date. Advocates championed key priorities, including:

- Maintaining robust federal research funding
- Passing a new farm bill with improvements for animal agriculture
- Supporting the Rural Veterinary Workforce Act

Keynote speaker Legend Thurman, a veterinarian, best-selling author, and passionate policy advocate, energized participants with insights on advancing animal welfare and agricultural policy through both ethical clarity and practical coalition-building.

Advocating for Academic Freedom

In February, the AAVMC Board of Directors endorsed the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom—a foundational document that has guided higher education for over eight decades. This endorsement arrived at a pivotal moment, sending a clear message that our member institutions must retain the right to express views, engage in open inquiry, conduct unfettered research, teach without ideological constraints, and design programs aligned with their educational missions. Academic freedom is not abstract; it is the oxygen that allows veterinary education to evolve, address emerging challenges, and pursue evidence wherever it leads—from animal welfare to food animal production.

Pet Week on Capitol Hill

AAVMC proudly sponsored Pet Week on Capitol Hill, highlighting the science behind the human/animal bond and its positive impacts on health and well-being. This year featured the introduction of the People and Animals Well-Being Act, which would expand tax-advantaged healthcare spending to include veterinary care expenses, with special provisions supporting veterans and individuals with disabilities, including unlimited coverage for service animals.



More than 130 academic veterinary medicine champions met with lawmakers and their staff on Capitol Hill for Advocacy Day 2025—our highest engagement ever.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Building Belonging

AAVMC remained committed to fostering a veterinary profession where all students, faculty, and staff feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive. In 2025, we advanced initiatives that enhanced financial transparency, promoted access, and amplified diverse voices—ensuring that belonging and equity remain central to the future of veterinary medicine.

Financial Transparency for Prospective Students

Financial transparency became increasingly important for prospective veterinary students in 2025. In response, AAVMC updated its [Cost Comparison Tool](#), enabling students to build realistic financial plans for veterinary school. The tool allows users to compare costs across institutions, explore scholarship opportunities, and model different financing scenarios—helping to remove barriers and make informed decisions.

Amplifying Diverse Voices

AAVMC's podcast series, "[On Air](#)," continued to provide insightful, timely conversations on topics ranging from curriculum innovation

and student wellbeing to diversity initiatives and research breakthroughs. Episodes highlighted strategies for recruiting and retaining underrepresented students and faculty, ultimately fostering success across the veterinary profession.

Identifying Emerging Trends

The [2024–2025 Annual Data Report](#) featured 50 charts and graphs highlighting trends in enrollment, diversity, applicant demographics, institutional budgets, tuition and debt, and academic personnel. This comprehensive visualization tool helps member institutions benchmark performance, identify emerging trends, and make data-informed decisions.

Podcast of the Year

*Recognizing outstanding podcast content released in 2024.
Voting for the 2025 cycle is currently underway.*

Voices of First-Generation Students from Rural Backgrounds

On this episode of "On Air," Mississippi State DVM student Sylmia Shepherd and faculty-practitioner Noe Galvan discuss their experiences as individuals from rural backgrounds. They share the unique experiences they have had as well as their choices about whether to practice in a rural community in the future.



LISTEN ON



Professional Development: Investing in Educators

AAVMC is committed to empowering veterinary educators with the skills, knowledge, and global perspectives needed to advance veterinary education. In 2025, our professional development initiatives strengthened leadership, promoted international collaboration, and provided platforms for sharing best practices—preparing faculty and administrators to lead and innovate in a rapidly evolving field.

CIVME Visit to South Korea

The Council for International Veterinary Medical Education (CIVME) attended the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations Congress in Daejeon, Korea, to meet with the Association of Asian Veterinary Schools (AAVS). During the trip, council members toured Seoul National University and collaborated with AAVS on programming for VetEd Asia 2024.

These international partnerships strengthen global veterinary education by facilitating knowledge exchange, promoting best practices, and building networks that transcend national boundaries.



AAVMC was pleased to collaborate with the Association of Asian Veterinary Schools on programming at VetEd Asia.

CIVME Webinar Series on Accreditation By the Numbers

May 2024: 49 participants; webinar translated into 4 languages

September 2024: 69 participants

April 2025: 87 participants; webinar translated into 2 languages

CIVME Webinar Series on Accreditation

The CIVME Webinar Series on Accreditation featured presentations from leading global accrediting bodies, including AVMA Council on Education, Australasian Veterinary Boards Council, and European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education.

Since the series' launch, 231 members have joined the CIVME learning community on AAVMC Learn, creating a vibrant forum for discussing accreditation standards, quality assurance, and educational innovation.

AAVMC Leadership Academy

Beginning in April 2025, the AAVMC Leadership Academy expanded from one to two cohorts annually, doubling opportunities for faculty members to develop leadership competencies. By offering both Fall and

Spring cohorts, the Leadership Academy continues fostering leadership growth across academic veterinary medicine—preparing the department chairs, deans, and institutional leaders of tomorrow.

AAVMC Events by the Numbers: Bringing the Community Together

Throughout the year, AAVMC events brought together educators, researchers, and students from around the world to share knowledge, spark collaboration, and strengthen the academic veterinary medicine community. From leadership development and educational innovation to student research and career exploration, these gatherings created meaningful opportunities for connection and growth across every stage of the veterinary education journey.

Deans Leadership Conference

- January 22–24, 2025, in Winter Park, FL
- 50+ attendees

AAVMC Annual Conference and Iverson Bell Symposium

- April 10–12, 2025, in Washington, D.C.
- 400+ international attendees
- 3 cutting-edge keynote speakers: Rick Seltzer, Chronicle of Higher Education; Zachary Pardos, University of California, Berkeley; and Jade Sasser, University of California, Riverside
- All session abstracts published in [JVME 52.2](#)

Academic Veterinary Medicine Symposium

- June 3–6, 2025, at Texas A&M University
- June 3: Spectrum of Care Symposium—65 attendees
- June 4–5: Competency-Based Veterinary Education (CBVE) Summer Workshop—99 attendees
- June 6: Consortium of Workplace-Based Education and Learning (COWBEL) Meeting—59 attendees

Veterinary Scholars Symposium

- August 7–9, 2025, in Spokane, WA
- 750+ attendees
- 600+ student poster presentations
- Becoming Faculty Workshop and Combined Degree Colloquium held in tandem

Primary Care Veterinary Educators Symposium

- October 22–25, 2025, at University of Minnesota
- 100+ attendees

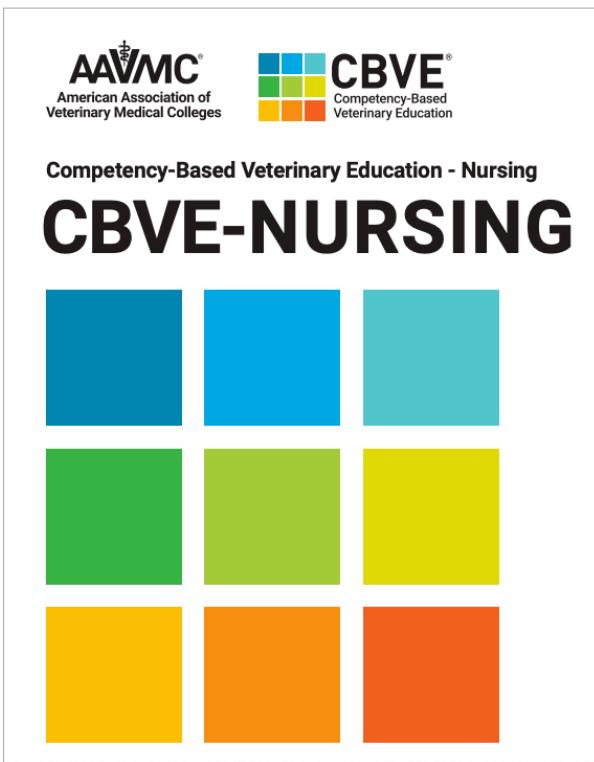
Academic Affairs: Advancing Educational Innovation

AAVMC continued to advance veterinary education through initiatives that foster innovation, enhance student learning, and prepare graduates for the evolving demands of veterinary practice. In 2025, our focus on competency-based frameworks and real-world practice readiness provided educators with practical tools and guidance to ensure students are well-equipped to succeed.

CBVE-Nursing Model Launch

AAVMC released the [Competency-Based Veterinary Education—Nursing Model](#) (CBVE-N). Aligned with the AAVMC CBVE 2.0 Model, CBVE-N offers a consensus foundation for developing and implementing competency-based curricula in veterinary nursing and veterinary technology programs.

This model can be used to guide outcomes-based and learner-centered education and assessment while maintaining alignment with AVMA Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities Essential and Recommended Skills.



Spectrum of Care

The AAVMC Spectrum of Care Initiative Task Force released [Enhancing Spectrum of Care Preparation in Veterinary Education Programs: An Implementation Strategies Guide](#)—a comprehensive resource offering strategic guidance for planning, implementing, and sustaining spectrum of care curricular changes.

Grounded in evidence-based change management principles, the guide features the Spectrum of Care Education Model and practical tools for preparing students to deliver accessible, ethical care across diverse contexts.

Developed collaboratively by nearly 40 veterinary educators from 25 AAVMC member institutions across five countries—alongside more than 25 veterinary professionals and practitioners—this guide reflects the shared expertise of those helping to prepare students for spectrum of care practice.

Wellbeing: Creating Sustainable Support Systems

Supporting the wellbeing of veterinary students, faculty, and staff is essential to thriving academic communities. In 2025, wellbeing initiatives focused on creating sustainable, systemic approaches that foster resilience, holistic health, and a culture of flourishing across colleges of veterinary medicine.

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Inaugural Systemic Wellbeing Course
Over 16 weeks, teams of college leaders and wellbeing professionals from 15 institutions explored the fundamentals of designing systemic wellbeing programs:

Auburn University
Colorado State University
Louisiana State University
Michigan State University
Mississippi State University
National Autonomous University of Mexico
The Ohio State University
Oklahoma State University
Oregon State University
Texas Tech University
Tuskegee University
Rowan University
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Tennessee
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Rather than framing wellbeing as an individual responsibility, these colleges are building cultures and structures that support the health and success of all community members.

New Assessment Tool for Organizational Wellbeing

Designed to support a thriving veterinary community, AAVMC also released the [Intentional Organizational Wellbeing Efforts Assessment Tool](#). This self-assessment resource helps institutions identify strengths, uncover areas for growth, and set priorities for meaningful improvement. Colleges are encouraged to respond candidly to ensure an accurate snapshot of progress in fostering organizational wellbeing.

