There's a new veterinarian on campus

By Marytina Marshall-Graduate Student

Energy, enthusiasm and a tough no-nonsense approach to work and morality only scratch the surface of an attempt to describe Dr. Heidi Hamlen, new woman, only woman, on the animal science faculty roster.

Cal Poly's Animal Science Department gained a much needed addition to their faculty with Dr. Hamlen. During a brief but informative conversation with Dr. Hamlen one gets a strong impression of how she feels about her job as a veterinarian and more importantly, her job as a teacher.

"It's very challenging to provide animal scientists with core background in veterinary issues," said Hamlen. "I want to give them the tools to make animal health happen and the core knowledge they must have to conduct an intelligent, progressive conversation with a veterinarian."

Hamlen's resume encompasses a breadth of experience in the field of veterinary medicine. Her most important credentials include a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Colorado State University, Master of Science from University of Saskatchewan and twelve years of extensive work on both clinical and research levels.

Hamlen views teaching as a two way street or a meeting of the minds. She enjoys being involved in education and took the job with the goal of empowering students with knowledge.

"If I can spread enthusiasm for the importance of animal welfare and disseminate knowledge to others, it will have a greater impact on animal health," said Hamlen. "That's my goal in life." Hamlen currently teaches anatomy and physiology and works as a clinician at the campus veterinary clinic in conjunction with Dr. Dale Smith. Additionally, she is redesigning the production medicine course to be taught in the winter quarter and plans to teach advanced systemic physiology in the spring.-P

Dr. Hamlen administers a lab practical final to VS 123 students.
Limousin herd increases diversity

By Veronica Viscarra-Animal Science

Cal Poly Animal Science Department diversified its beef cattle program by adding a new Limousin herd.

The Limousins will become a part of an established program that includes herds of Angus, Shorthorn and Hereford breeding cattle. Establishment of these herds began over 60 years ago.

Cal Poly, in cooperation with the North American Limousin Foundation (NALF) established the herd. This herd will enable students to work with a breed that focuses on carcass traits and terminal breeding programs.

Mike Hall, senior beef cattle specialist, said, "The new Limousin cattle, being more of a carcass breed, will give students the opportunity to work with a breed that is different, yet complimentary to other breeds maintained by the university."

Development of the new herd was accomplished through the use of embryo transfer. Several top Limousin breeders associated with NALF donated embryos to the university to establish a foundation herd exhibiting superior bloodlines.

The embryos were transferred into crossbred recipient cows and calved out as part of the student run Escuela Ranch cow calf enterprise project. Two years of embryo transfers resulted in the birth of 17 heifers and 7 bull calves.

The original calves are horned and red. Through breeding and selection, the university hopes to establish a polled and black herd in the future.

All the original heifers become a part of the cow herd while the bull calves are put on the Cal Poly Bull Test. During the bull test, students are able to collect a wide range of performance data on the bulls. Yearling bulls are also used as clean up bulls on the university’s commercial cow herd.

Calves currently being born will be placed on the Cal Poly Steer Performance Test in the summer. Students then have the opportunity to collect performance and carcass data on the Limousin sired calves.

“New opportunities for learning due to the addition of the new Limousin herd, creates enthusiasm for both students and faculty,” said Hall.

Clubs make for a complete student

By Kristin Ming-Animal Science

During the early 1900s, Cal Poly’s Animal Science Department founded the Veterinary Science Club.

The Veterinary Science Club opens many doors to students who want to pursue a career as a veterinarian. Involvement in the club allows students the opportunity to engage in many activities.

Activities include petting zoos, guest speakers, community services and an annual trip to U.C. Davis. The guest speakers from the community belong to different career fields centered around animal science.

Lisa Brown, club historian, said, "The club opens up a doorway between the college and the community."

Involvement in the club helps students get into a network that will help them get into veterinary school. Students receive advice on class scheduling and additional experience outside of the classroom.

"From the club I’ve gained more knowledge of the variety in the veterinary science field, and a network of friends and information to help me achieve my goal of becoming a veterinarian," Brown said.

The club is not only educational, but social too. "I’ve gained information about what a veterinarian does and what goes on behind the scenes from being involved in the club," said Tony Giordano, an animal science freshman. "I attended one of the club’s first meetings and was welcomed by many friendly people."

Dr. Heidi Hamlen, an animal science faculty member, is serving her first year as club advisor.

Hamlen said, "I want to facilitate them in meeting their goals and provide any advice I can about the plethora of opportunities in veterinary medicine."

To get involved, please contact Dr. Hamlen at (805)756-2539 or 756-2419.
Students go from saddle to sale

By Ryder Beery-Animal Science

Six months in the saddle paid off for five Cal Poly students at the 1994 National Rein Cow Horse Association Snaffle Bit Futurity Performance Horse Sale in Fresno.

Just six months ago Mike Lund, an animal science professor, endured a grueling application and selection process for what is commonly known as the Quarter Horse Enterprise Project.

With nearly 20 applicants, Lund only had horses for five. “The group that Mike selected was great,” said Jean Marshall, animal science senior and project member: “I admire him for working so well with a group of five women.”

The Quarter Horse Project started in 1977. The horses used are bred and raised at Cal Poly with the exception of a few high quality donated horses. “Our biggest hardship is the need for more donated horses,” said Lund.

Before entering the project, these horses are used in the breeding project, judging, halter fitting and application to horse practices courses.

The project took five, two year old horses to the Futurity Sale on September 24. “With an average price of $2,800, the sale proved to be very successful for Cal Poly,” said Lund. The high seller named Cutter’s Velvet, ridden by Denise Delph, brought in $3,000 for the project.

“1994 Quarter Horse Project members. Left to right: Denise Delph, Monica Saxe, Lana Anderson, Jean Marshall and Emily Wheeler.”

““The price that my horse sold for was a direct result of my six months of hard work.”
-Jean Marshall
Animal Science

“The neat thing about the Quarter Horse Project is that the students get to represent not only Cal Poly, but also themselves, to a large population of horse and industry people,” said Lund. “They go through an intense training process with their horses, and the sale is the culmination of all of their efforts.”

For the members of the project, the training is all worthwhile once they enter the sale ring. “Hearing my name over the sound system and hearing the price of my horse rise with each new bid as I paraded him around the sale ring was incredible,” said Marshall. “The price that my horse sold for was a direct result of my six months of hard work. I felt like the project was now complete.”

During the six months of the project, the students had the opportunity to work their horses in every aspect of western horsemanship. This year, they worked with some of the top names in horse training including: Corey Baker, Sandy Collier, Ron Ralls, Ted Robinson, Jon Roeser, and Doug Williamson. Not only are these trainers familiar with the project, but some of them are also Cal Poly alumni.

“Working with the various trainers gives the students a chance to develop confidence and work on their communication skills,” said Lund. “Their horsemanship also blossoms and they gain invaluable exposure and contacts within the industry.”
Faculty Showcase Part I

Mike Lund-Senior Horse Specialist

Stats: Teaches Equine Reproduction, Applied Horse Practices and Advanced Western Riding; Advises Cutting & Reining Club, Breeding Enterprise, Horse Unit and Quarter Horse Enterprise.

He received his B.S. and M.S. from North Dakota State University in animal science. "Working with students in a practical, hands-on way, is what I like most about teaching here." -P

Dr. Bill Plummer

Stats: Teaches Intro Animal Nutrition and Feeding, Undergraduate Seminar, Reproductive Physiology and Anatomy/Physiology; Advises Vet Science Club, Farmhouse Fraternity and Reproductive Enterprise.

He received his B.S. and M.S. from North Carolina State University in animal science and a Ph.D. from Utah State University in reproduction. "I like watching students blossom when given a challenge." -P

Mike Hall-Beef Cattle Specialist

Stats: Teaches Market Beef Production; Advises Young Cattleman's Association, Bull Test Enterprise, Beef Cattle Evaluation Center, Pure Bred Herd and Beef Unit.

He received his B.S. from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo in animal science and an M.S. from Kansas State University in animal breeding/genetics. "I think the new curriculum is going to attract more students to the department and better prepare them for the job market." -P

Dr. Steve Daugherty

Stats: Teaches Intro Animal Nutrition and Feeding and Animal Nutrition; Advises Feed Lot Enterprise and Farm House Fraternity.

He received his B.S. from New Mexico State University in animal science, his M.S. from Colorado State University in ruminant nutrition and his Ph.D. from New Mexico State University in nutrition/biochemistry. "I like a university that emphasizes teaching versus graduate research." -P

Jim Flanagan

Stats: Teaches Market Beef Production and Commercial Beef Management; Advises Escuela Ranch Enterprise and Escuela Ranch Manager.

He received his B.S. and M.S. at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo in animal science and general agriculture. "I like the smallness of the university which enables us to have more individual contact with the students." -P
Scotto leads the charge

By Cara Acosta-Journalism

Ken Scotto’s door was open and he greeted me with a smile and a firm handshake.

Framed photographs adorned his walls and no piles cluttered his desk. He handed me his card which included his home phone number.

Scotto was elected Chair of the Animal Science Department on September 1. An alumni of Cal Poly and the University of Nevada, Reno, he taught at Cal Poly for 24 years.

He became involved with agriculture at Cal Poly, milking cows from day one of his academic career. He serves as a prime example of accomplishment in the field, even though he wasn’t born into agriculture.

After graduation, Scotto spent one year on a cattle ranch in northern California. Since then, he involved himself in most aspects of the industry.

“I like to consider myself a stockman and one who enjoys livestock production and working with animals,” Scotto said.

“That’s why any of us are here, because students are here and if you don’t appreciate that, then I think a lot of things can be lost in terms of your mission.”

-Ken Scotto
Animal Science Chair

Scotto said he feels fond of the university’s approach to education because the students perform most of the work on the livestock. “Unlike land grant universities, we don’t use technicians, we use students living at these areas,” said Scotto.

He seems down to earth, not forgetting why he puts so many hours into his job. “That’s why any of us are here, because students are here and if you don’t appreciate that then I think a lot of things can be lost in terms of your mission,” he said.

Scotto stressed how important he felt experience was to the student. He advocates one-on-one teaching. “Cal Poly affords a really nice compliment of inside, outside work and I think that’s what makes a lot of kids stay in school,” Scotto said. Also, he strongly believes that experience is essential to a student’s ability to perform a job well.

Scotto feels he will be part of a lot of changes due to the recent modifications in curriculum. He hopes to facilitate this new curriculum. He also hopes to be involved with the rest of the teachers in the department.

“I like to have all the faculty feel that I support them and get around to see what they’re doing,” said Scotto.
Going once, going twice, gone!

By Dena Krumwide-Animal Science

With the tap of the gavel and the rhythmic chant of auctioneer H. "Skinner" Hardy, the Cal Poly Bull Test was underway. Approximately 200 interested cattlemen, students and community members turned out for the 38th annual Bull Test, Field Day and Trade Show on Monday, Oct. 3. The Bull Test proved to be a great success for Cal Poly and bull consignors.

"Considering commercial and feeder market prices along with weather conditions, I thought the prices were very good," said consignor Abbie Nelson of Wilton. Nelson thought the bulls were in excellent condition.

"Bulls are put on a 100-day high ration diet to separate genetic difference with a 3-pound-per-day gain," said Mike Hall, beef cattle specialist for the Cal Poly Animal Science Department. The bulls this year had all grain taken away, and fed only a hay diet for the last 30 days to help eliminate excess fat and provide range-ready yearling bulls. Hall feels this new feeding strategy was very well received by both consignors and buyers.

The top 153 bulls of 340 consigned sold to cattlemen throughout the western United States. The outstanding consignment was awarded to Vogel Land and Cattle. Bill Vogel of Shandon believed strongly in his breeding program and the use of expected progeny difference (EPD) performance records. "We can see a strong correlation and are happy to see them," said Vogel.

Among other factors recognized at the Bull Test are EPD’s, which estimate and predict offspring qualities such as birth weight, conformation, growth, milk production and mothering ability. Scrotal circumference and hip heights are measured and recorded on each bull to give further information. With this technology, ranchers should be able to make an informed, educated decision about their individual herd’s needs.

Sessions at the field day consisted of three important areas facing the beef industry today: the Cow-Calf Quality Assurance Program, the use of EPD performance records and sustainable intensive grazing.

"Beef production is solar powered, encompassing the entire bio system."

-Bob Blanchard
Field Day Speaker

Bob Blanchard’s intensive grazing sessions raised environmental awareness among cattlemen. "Beef production is solar powered, encompassing the entire bio system," said Blanchard.

This analogy helped ranchers view grazing from a holistic management perspective, encompassing environmental and economic aspects. "The changing of pasture practices are worth trying and looking into," said Carmen Vogel.
Fierce competitors make a strong team

By Lisa Vargas-Agribusiness

Cal Poly’s Livestock Judging Team is a fierce competitor when it comes to evaluating livestock.

Ethen Jackson, Suzanne Stretch, Becky Harper, David Vargas, Bret Theodozio, Troy Gravatt, Donica Manfrina and Forest Mathews make up the team. Dr. Cliff Stokes, an animal science faculty member, is their coach. They have come together to share a common interest and to create a competitive team.

"What I strive for is an understanding of the livestock industry."
-Dr. Cliff Stokes
Animal Science professor

"We’re all different individuals, but we try to come together as a team to do our best," said Stretch.

Hours and hours of intense practice prepares the team to compete in contests across the country. Team members place sheep, beef, swine and horses in classes and give elaborate sets of reasons to back their class placings.

"What I strive for is an understanding of the livestock industry," said Stokes. "We approach it as not just a contest, but an understanding of agriculture and livestock production."

Some of the contests they have participated in this fall include the L.A. County Fair, Pacific International in Oregon, Cow Palace in San Francisco and North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky. Winter competitions include Arizona National in Phoenix and National Western in Denver, Co.

"The team has come a long way since we started and everyone here has gained a lot of practical experience."
-Bret Theodozio
Agriculture Science

"Livestock judging is the opportunity for them to improve their communication and decision-making skills," said Stokes. Theodozio said, "The team has come a long way since we started and everyone here has gained a lot of practical experience."

Mathews said, "You have to make a big commitment because so much time and effort has to be put into it, and I think everyone here has made that commitment."

"Improved speaking ability and an increased level of confidence are two of my personal benefits."
-David Vargas
Animal Science

Team members, along with their coach, receive extensive benefits from the program.

"You get to travel around to a lot of states and different schools, and it’s a good opportunity to meet people and know what the industries are looking for," said Manfrina.

Vargas said, "Improved speaking ability and an increased level of confidence are two of my personal benefits."

Stokes said, "My biggest reward is getting to know the students better than I ever would in a classroom situation."

"I am excited about the opportunity to work with the students on this activity because it’s what I love to do."
-Michelle Sando
Graduate Student

Stokes will not be coming back to coach next year. After taking Jim Hyer’s place three-and-a-half years ago, Stokes said, "I finally had to make a decision to free up weekends and get back in the classroom."

Michelle Sando, a graduate student, will be taking Stokes’ place as the new coach. Sando is a graduate of Cal Poly and a former 1991 Livestock Judging Team member. "I am excited about the opportunity to work with the students on this activity because its what I love to do," said Sando.

When asked about the future of Cal Poly’s Livestock Judging Program, Stokes said, "The program should stay strong because of the basis of the activity which is developing communication and speaking skills." -P
THANK YOU!

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