(May 11, 2009 Stillwater, OK) – Todd Yeagley, a native Oklahoman and a third-generation attorney, graduated from the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Health Sciences on May 9, 2009.

Todd's unlikely path to veterinary medicine began in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he practiced law and met his wife Nora O'Neill, who is also an attorney.

"I chose to study law because it is an empowering degree that can be used in many facets of life," says Todd.

However, Todd soon found himself wanting more than the practice of law could offer, and he started looking into other career options. As he considered his future, he reflected back on his roots in rural Oklahoma and the contact he had with veterinarians caring for his family's many animals.

"I thought back on my childhood aspiration of becoming a veterinarian, and began spending time with large and small animal veterinarians. I realized that veterinary medicine required skills similar to those that I enjoyed using in the practice of law. Veterinarians have to apply their knowledge to the facts and symptoms presented by the animal and its owner to reach a diagnosis. Similarly, the practice of law required me to apply my legal knowledge to the facts and issues presented to create an argument in my client's favor."

After carefully considering it for more than a year, Todd decided to leave the courtroom and begin working towards a career in veterinary medicine. He returned to school to obtain the prerequisites for his veterinary school applications and continued to seek more veterinary experience by reuniting with the veterinarians he had known as a child, Drs. Bob Shoup (OSU '82) and Steve Weir (OSU '80) of the Catoosa Small Animal Hospital.

"It was a tough decision," he smiles. "Even after three years at Notre Dame Law School, I had to complete around 60 hours of prerequisites just to apply to veterinary school. My wife's support has been instrumental through the process."

Todd was among the 78 graduates earning their degree in veterinary medicine this year. He and his classmates at OSU have spent the final phase of their program honing their clinical skills at OSU's Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. Each patient treated at the veterinary hospital is assigned a 4th year veterinary student as well as a faculty member.

"I get up every day looking forward to practicing veterinary medicine. I enjoy the tangible and constructive aspect of surgery, but the thing I probably enjoy the most is getting letters from clients thanking me for assisting them in the care of their animals."

Following graduation, this new veterinarian will complete a small animal medicine and surgery internship at OSU. Todd looks forward to merging his legal and business management background with the rigorous veterinary training he received at OSU's Center for Veterinary Health Sciences, where they take great pride in graduating competent, confident, practice ready veterinarians.

The Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences is one of 28 veterinary colleges in the United States and is fully accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association. The center's Boren Veterinary Medial Teaching Hospital is open to the public and provides routine and specialized care for small and large animals. It also offers 24 hour emergency care and is certified by the American Animal Hospital Association. For more information, visit www.cvhs.okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7000.

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