(May 11, 2009 Stillwater, OK) – Growing up in Edmond, Okla., R. Adam Laughlin, Oklahoma State University (OSU) Center for Veterinary Health Sciences Class of 2009, never felt like his father, Ronald Laughlin, DVM, OSU Class of 1980, pushed veterinary medicine on him or made him feel like he had to follow in his dad's footsteps. So using the experience he gained running a small lawn mowing service while in high school, Adam chose to go into landscape architecture in college.

"Several years and a few internships into that degree, I decided that I wanted to pursue a career in something that really challenged me," says Adam. "During this 'transition period' as I like to call it, I took up cleaning kennels for a summer at my Dad's clinic, Danforth Animal Hospital, located in Edmond."

It was during that summer while working for his father that Adam seriously started to consider veterinary medicine as a career.

"I admired the way my father treated his clients and the respect and loyalty that they gave him in return. I also liked the day to day challenges that being a veterinarian presented and the problem solving nature of the career."

Adam's wife, Mendy Laughlin, DVM, OSU Class of 2006, also played a role in refining Adam's career choice.

"She showed me the care and compassion that is intimately intertwined with the veterinary profession. Her ability to not only care for the animal she's treating but also for the animal's owner was a vital component of being a veterinarian that I could never have fully understood and appreciated without her help.

"I will remember long nights studying for various exams with some of my classmates, which eventually revealed these people to be not just classmates, but great friends whom I couldn't have made it through without. Having shared the experience of completing the veterinary degree together, I feel we have a strong common bond that we will take with us as we leave this stage of our lives and continue on towards our careers in veterinary medicine."

Adam is among 78 veterinary students who received their DVM degree on Saturday, May 9. His father hooded Adam during the veterinary center's Hooding Ceremony held in Gallagher Iba Arena. Following his graduation, Adam will join his wife and father at the Danforth Animal Hospital to practice small animal veterinary medicine.

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