(May 11, 2009 Stillwater, OK) – Peeking through a crack in the barn door watching two barn owls fly that her parents had nursed back from injuries, Alana Jenkins, Oklahoma State University (OSU) Center for Veterinary Health Sciences Class of 2009, knew she wanted to grow up to be a veterinarian like her dad, Stanley Jenkins, DVM, OSU Class of 1981.

“I was about four years old and my parents brought my older sister and me out to the barn to show us the owls before they released them,” recalls Alana. “You could see the majesty and strength of the birds and how my parents’ hard work had paid off.”

Dr. Jenkins owns Town and Country Animal Hospital in Henryetta, Okla., providing mixed animal veterinary care for the surrounding community. He hooded Alana during the veterinary center’s Hooding Ceremony held in Gallagher Iba Arena on Saturday, May 9.

“I’m excited to hood my daughter,” says Stanley. “I have four children and they have always talked about becoming veterinarians but I didn’t foresee it happening.”

Alana is among 78 veterinary students who received their DVM degree. Following her graduation, she plans to complete an internship with the Dogs and Cats Veterinary Referral Clinic in Bowie, Md., and then possibly later a specialty residency in surgery or cardiology.

“My favorite memories of veterinary school are studying with my best friend, Sharon,” smiles Alana. “We would meet at 6 a.m. at Braum’s and study toxicology, cardiology, and anything else that came along. We were ‘regulars’ at the store. As much as I am ready to graduate, I loved veterinary school and would do it all over again.”

Alana goes on to say that she likes how the challenges of veterinary medicine are never the same and the opportunities are endless for practicing medicine.

“Something different always walks through the door.”

Graduates with a degree in veterinary medicine have many career choices. Some will choose private practice for companion animals, horses or food animals. Others will pursue careers in academia, research, zoo, exotics and wildlife medicine, pharmaceutical companies, public health or military posts.

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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