(August 2, 2011 Stillwater, OK) -- Thirteen veterinary students at Oklahoma State University's (OSU) Center for Veterinary Health Sciences and a visiting undergraduate student recently wrapped up a 12-week summer research program at the veterinary center.

Sponsored by competitive grants from the National Institutes of Health, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Merial, Morris Animal Foundation and the OSU veterinary center, the Veterinary Research Scholars Program is designed to identify talented and highly motivated veterinary students interested in exploring a career in biomedical research.

Faculty directors for the summer research scholars program were Drs. Mason Reichard and Chris Ross. Dr. Jerry Malayer is the Principle Investigator on the NIH grant that provides much of the funding for the program. Staff support was provided by Joyce Axton. Mentors for the program were Drs. Melanie Boileau, Anthony Confer, Jean d'Offay, Myron Hinsdale, Eileen Johnson, Lin Liu, Jerry Malayer, Dianne McFarlane, Mason Reichard, Jared Taylor, Gary White and Glenn Zhang.

Program participants conducted a mentored research project, which covered all aspects of a research project including experimental design, methodology, data collection and analysis, and drawing conclusions. Students also received instruction on a number of research-related topics and toured specialized research facilities in the region.

At the conclusion of the program, each student presented their research projects at the veterinary center. Twelve of the 14 participants will travel to the University of Florida to present their research at the National Veterinary Scholars Symposium.

Research projects of the OSU students varied and covered areas of ongoing study by OSU veterinary center researchers, as well as faculty at other Oklahoma research centers. Project topics ranged from studies of parasites and viruses affecting baboons, acute respiratory distress syndrome, and treatment of H1N1 influenza to studies of economically important diseases of livestock, including bovine pinkeye and shipping fever.

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 Medical 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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