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ACCREDITATION ANNOUNCEMENT LAUNCHES USU'S VETERINARY COLLEGE

LOGAN – Utah State University's College of Veterinary Medicine received assurance of its provisional accreditation with the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education (AVMA COE), a pivotal step to making USU home to the state's first four-year veterinary degree program.

Dirk Vanderwall, Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, said receiving the Letter of Reasonable Assurance from the AVMA COE indicates that USU's program is on track to meet its 11 standards of accreditation, the highest standard of achievement for veterinary medical education in the United States.

Graduation from an institution with AVMA COE accreditation is required for any practitioner of veterinary medicine to be licensed or certified by state licensing boards.

With today's announcement, the college opens applications for enrollment to prospective members of the inaugural class. Accepted students – the Class of 2029 – will begin their studies this fall semester.

“Receipt of the Letter of Reasonable Assurance puts us on the path to fulfill our commitment to graduating exceptional veterinarians who are not only skilled practitioners but also compassionate professionals, ready to take on the challenges of animal health with confidence and competence,” Vanderwall said.

USU Interim President Alan L. Smith said, “This is an incredibly important milestone for the College of Veterinary Medicine at USU. Reaching this point speaks to the committed efforts of the faculty, staff, and administrators in the CVM, USU leadership, and the many stakeholders across the state who fervently supported the establishment of the college.”

This milestone has been 118 years in the making, starting in 1907 when trustees of the Agricultural College of Utah, as USU was then known, put forward their vision for a veterinary school. But it wasn't until 2011 that the Utah Legislature voted to create and fund a veterinary medical education program within USU's College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences. This launched a

partnership with Washington State University, wherein USU vet students spent their first two years of study in Utah before relocating to Pullman, Washington for their final two years and graduation. That partnership will sunset after graduation of the class of 2028.

State leaders foresee that a home-grown veterinary education will translate into home-grown veterinary practitioners to bolster Utah's \$1.82 billion agricultural industry, as well as the needs of small animal owners around the state.

USU looks forward to expanding class sizes for the College of Veterinary Medicine in the future, capping at 80 students per year. By summer 2026, construction will be completed on the program's new state-funded Veterinary Medical Education building, designed by Salt Lake City's VCBO Architecture, with Jacobson Construction as general contractor. The new laboratories, classrooms, offices and study spaces will soon be ready to welcome the College of Veterinary Medicine to its permanent home.

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