

THE STUDENT

EXPERIENCE

Vol. 7, Fall 2018

at RUSVM

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

**NEW RESEARCH
& PATHOLOGY
BUILDING**

**NEW STUDENT
EXPERIENCE
DIRECTOR**



JYN

JOHNNY WEISS
SEVENTH SEMESTER
SPOTLIGHT

**DIVERSITY
INITIATIVES**

**ALUMNI CORNER:
DR. TOFFOLI**



ROSS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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A Message from the Senior Campus Administrator

Ray E. Francis

Welcome to the fall 2018 semester and the 7th issue of The Student Experience newsletter!

As Senior Campus Administrator at RUSVM, I have the pleasure of working towards the continuous improvement of your overall experience, including ensuring that our facilities and operations on campus are fit for purpose and support a high quality learning environment for you. In my role, I oversee all non-academic campus operations including Safety and Security, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Purchasing, Environmental, Health and Safety, Project Management and our RUSVM Preparatory School. Together, these operational teams are charged with creating an environment where you can focus on achieving your educational goals and careers ambitions while here.

You speak. We hear and deliver.

We are excited about the recent opening of the near 20,000 square foot research and pathology building this past July, and the opportunity this presents for you to increase your involvement in research that can impact



our world, including research funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH). We are also looking forward to the opening of phase one of the new academic hub in January of 2019 that will host administrative offices as well as small group study rooms. Your feedback on the need for more study spaces has clearly been heard by our leadership and I invite you to continue to share with us how we can improve your experience and help you achieve your academic goals.

Safety and Security

Our colleagues in the safety and se-

curity department continue to be available to you 24 hours a day and are committed to ensuring your safety on and off campus. Our security night shuttle also runs every evening during the semester. Please look out for the schedule and make use of this excellent service!

RUSVM in the Community

We are also engaged with many activities in the wider St. Kitts and Nevis community and are proud to show in practical ways how our students and colleagues give back to the island that we call home for the time we are here. We continue to support volunteer efforts like the RUSVM Day of Service; and provide scholarship support for high school students in St. Kitts and partner and support the St. Christopher Children's Home. We invite you to work with SAVMA and many other clubs to join us in doing well by doing good in our community.

My best wishes to you for a successful semester!

Ray Francis

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AABP OUTREACH TRIP TO NEVIS

On Saturday, June 9, 2018, AABP student members honed their palpating skills and gathered pregnancy information about the herd in Nevis they've been working with. The trip affords the students hands on practice herding, loading, securing, and palpating the cows and the information allows the government to accurately track pregnancy rates, and plan cattle sales. Thanks to Dr. Aspinas Chapwanya and the AABP students for their important and continued work.



7th Semester Spotlight: Johnny Weiss



**JOHNNY
WEISS**

JYN

1. Where are you from? Where's home?
A little town in Maryland called Warwick. Closest signs of civilization are Middletown, DE and Elkton, MD.

2. Where did you go to undergrad and what degree did you earn?
University of Maryland, B.S. Animal Science

3. What made you choose RUSVM?
One of my mentors, Dr. Erika Gennusa, is a Rossie and raved about RUSVM and St. Kitts. Her confidence, knowledge, and experience made me realize that was the type of vet I wanted to be.

4. What has been your favorite part about living on St. Kitts?

Can I say everything? If I had to narrow it down I would say a combination of being able to go to the beach almost whenever I want, and having access to so many amazing restaurants for any given lunch or dinner. I am going to miss the water, the food, and the people.

5. What advice do you have for students coming to RUSVM and St. Kitts?

Take advantage of your professors. Go to their office hours, ask them questions after class, say hi to them when you see them out to dinner around the island. You can leave this island with personal relationships with some of the very best educators in this profession, so don't let that opportunity go to waste.

6. After being at RUSVM 6+ semesters, what fact about yourself would your colleagues be surprised to learn?
I played wide receiver on my high school's football team. However, no one would be surprised that I was 3rd string.

7. Where are you headed for your clinical studies? University of Minnesota.

8. What is your ultimate career goal with your DVM? Every semester I realize the vast amount of career options for a DVM. I have taken 3 or 4 courses that made me think "I love this enough to specialize in it," but as of now my solid career and personal goal is to never stop learning.

9. Who is your professional role model and why?

My stepfather, Dr. David Beste, absolutely epitomizes what it means to be a good veterinarian, role model, and father. His ability to explain complicated diagnoses to clients in a way that is easy for them to understand never ceases to amaze me.

10. What has been your favorite course at RUSVM and why?

Clinical pathology. It was the first class I took that felt like I was expected to think like a doctor, and seeing the puzzle pieces come together in complex cases was extremely satisfying. It also helped that Dr. Sample is my hero.

11. What extra-curricular activities have you been involved in at RUSVM?

I have had the honor of being involved with several excellent student organizations during my time here. I have served on the executive board for VBMA as the social media coordinator for a year, co-founded the RUSVM Musical Theater Club, represented Orange at Mr. RUSVM twice (in 4th and 7th semester), served as co-Class Representative for Orange from semester 4-7, served on the PASS committee, and spent far too much time playing Dungeons and Dragons.

12. If you could thank one person for all you have achieved so far, who would that be and why?

My mom. She has been my biggest supporter my entire life and I could not have made it this far without her constant guidance, wisdom, and daily "Love you goodnight" text messages. She also is a fantastic LVT and is 100% responsible for my phlebotomy skills, and unfortunately also for my less than stellar nail trimming.

Women in Leadership



Adtalem EDGE RUSVM Chapter presented on Women in Leadership on Monday, July 9, 2018.

Guests included:

Ms. Lisa Wardell, Adtalem Global Education President & CEO, Dr. Caroline Lawrence, Medical Internist and Cardiologist at Meridian Medical Consultants and Dr. Barbara Jones, Owner, Equilibrium Veterinary Services, Cynthia Berry, Senior Manager, Adtalem Global Education and Merclyn Hughes, St. Kitts and Nevis Chief of Immigration.

“Choose to Refuse”



Dr. Kimberly Stewart and Ms. Sara Ramirez of the St. Kitts Sea Turtle Monitoring Network were guests on the July 2018 Animal Answers radio program on WINNFM 98.9. to talk about the SKN Plastic Free July campaign.

Plastic Free July is a global challenge to “Choose to Refuse” single-use plastic. Plastic Free July calls on all global citizens to collectively address one of the world’s greatest environmental issues, plastic pollution.



The PASS program had 46 students complete their certificates during the summer semester of 2018.



Featured Colleagues



ROXANNE SCHREIBER
Student Success Centre Manager

NATALIE ROBINSON
Student Success Coach

What services do you provide to the students? We offer individual academic advising. We also provide Interactive Learning Workshops and seminars for students, faculty and staff.

What advice do you have for students in regards to working with your department? Don't be afraid to book a meeting. We work with everyone: we see 4.0 students and those that may have failed twice.

What job tasks do you do behind the scenes that students and colleagues might not be aware of? We organize the Teaching Assistant (TA) program and also provide guidance and assistance to students who receive accommodations.

Is there something students or colleagues can do to make your job easier? Students: Follow through on the recommendations we provide. Faculty: Let us know what is going on with your classes

and what you think will help the students succeed.

What is the most common question you are asked? We are often asked overly broad questions like, "I need to learn how to study" or "I am way behind and have failed the first 2 exams, with only the final left and now I need your help." If students come in early, be proactive, and follow through on recommendations, they typically have good results.

Meet the new Director of the Student Experience

Hometown? Saegertown, PA
College/University? Edinboro University of PA. I was a graphic design major.

What inspired you to join RUSVM?

I had a good career but wanted to have an adventure. This allowed me to continue to do what I loved while experiencing a different part of the world.

What are your core focus areas for this year?

I am focusing on the student experience team—making sure they get the support and recognition they deserve and listening to students so I can make sure I understand the support they need to become great veterinarians.



David Satterlee
Director Student Experience

If I can get these two right, the rest will solve itself.

How would you describe your leadership style?

Technically, I'm a situational leader—applying the appropriate approach for the specific need. Practically, I try to tell the truth, respect people, and have fun as I work.

What's one thing colleagues and students may not know about you that they might find interesting?

I'll tell you two things. I am most proud personally of having run five marathons. I am most embarrassed about my very specific phobia. People singing around food freaks me out. Think about a person's birthday with a cake and everyone singing Happy Birthday. Those types of experiences terrify me! It's so odd and hilarious.

What activities do you enjoy when you aren't working at RUSVM?

I want to taste everything and see everything and go everywhere—that's all!

What piece of advice would you give to students to help them enjoy their experience at RUSVM and on the island?

Anything worth our time involves some level of stretch or challenge or temporary discomfort. We call it learning. Trust the process of growing and becoming someone new. Whether its snorkeling for the first time or engaging cross-culturally, or eating something "strange." You will never regret that you tried.



PASS hosted its second annual Faculty Speed Networking Event on Wednesday, July 25, 2018. 13 faculty and 56 students participated.

Celebrate and Honor with the Diversity Committee

The RUSVM Diversity Committee recognizes various special dates and moments. The committee is dedicated to sharing information with students so they become well-rounded, culturally-aware professionals.



Juneteenth



International Friendship Day



Pride Day/Month



US Memorial Day



World Refugee Day

Canada Day & 4th of July



Mother's and Father's Day

ALUMNI CORNER

Dr. Caroline Toffoli

Veterinarians are Public Servants

It was a mix of looking back and looking forward for alumna Colonel Caroline Toffoli, DVM, when she returned to St. Kitts after 29 years to deliver the and White Coat ceremony address to the incoming DVM class. Dr. Toffoli got a chance to reconnect with campus registrar Denise Fyfield who has been at RUSVM since its inception, meet RUSVM faculty, revisit where she lived as a student and share career insights with RUSVM students.

Dr. Toffoli's career exemplifies the popular saying: "When one door closes, another opens"! It may have been serendipity which took her career to places she hadn't envisaged but she welcomed every opportunity and learned from each of them.

Dr. Toffoli is a 1989 graduate of RUSVM and has had a successful career in the US Army Reserve where she now holds the rank of Colonel. Her military career has led her to be deployed to Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. From 2010 -2013, COL Toffoli was appointed to the position of Acting Medical Director/Deputy Medical Director of the Chemical and Biological Defense program by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense, at The Pentagon. COL Toffoli received the



Office of the Secretary of Defense Identification Badge for her service at the Pentagon. In 2014, COL Toffoli became the first veterinarian to Command an Army Combat Support Hospital. She is currently serving as the Chief Veterinarian of the 804th Medical Brigade in Devens, Massachusetts.

In civilian life, Dr. Toffoli has spent more than 25 years in companion animal clinical practice, and has owned her own mobile practice. In addition, she has more than 15 years of experience in all phases of pharmaceutical research and devel-



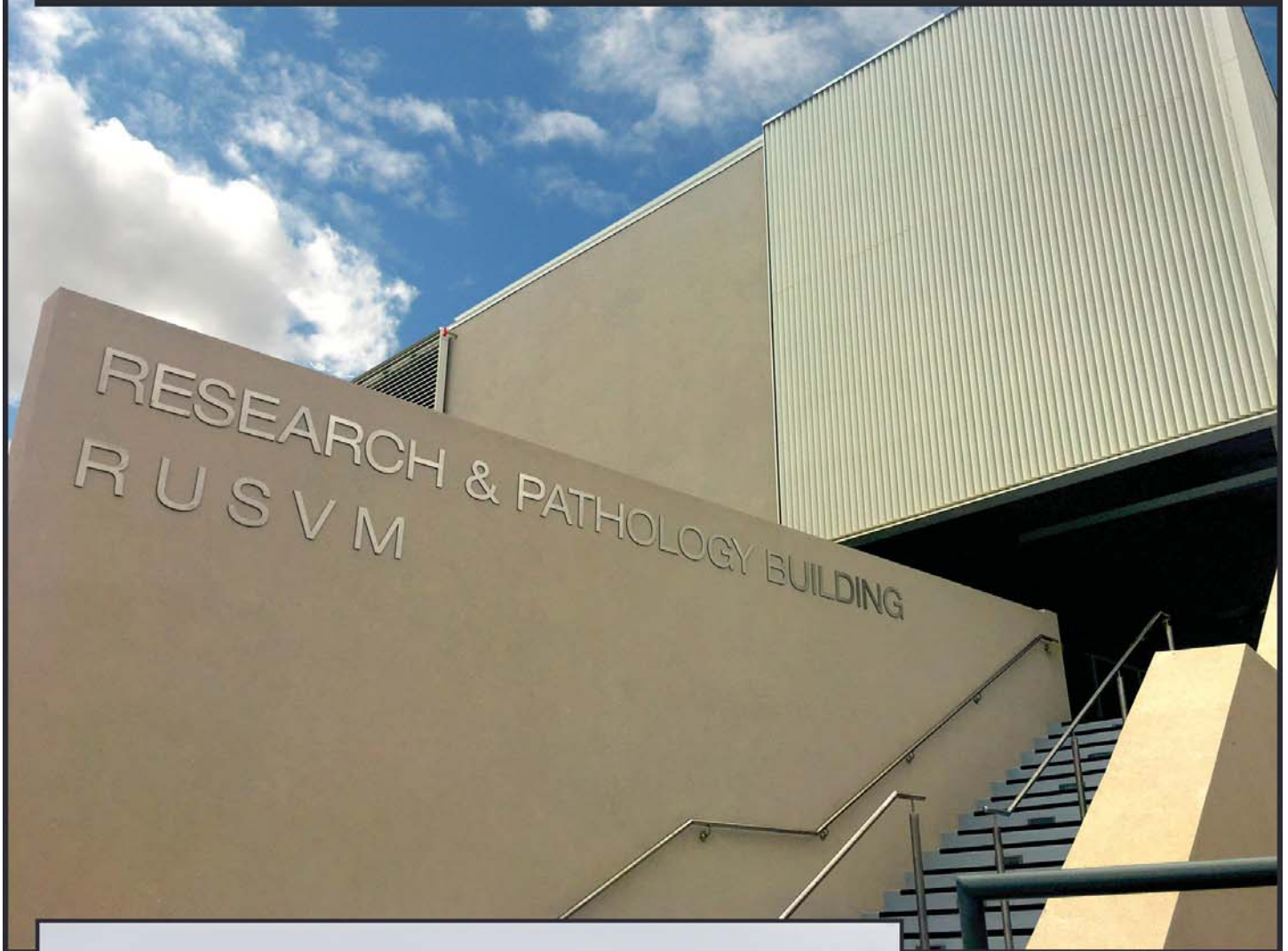
opment. She is currently employed as an independent consultant in biodefense for the development of pharmaceuticals, biologics and diagnostics.

In her White Coat speaker address, Dr. Toffoli proposed that all veterinarians are public servants and through her "meandering path of incidents, accidents and versatile opportunities" in the veterinary profession, she certainly has demonstrated her commitment to serve!



Caroline
Toffoli

RUSVM Opens New Research & Pathology Building



"Our commitment to research is essential to the future of veterinary medicine, which will involve collaborations across multiple disciplines to address zoonotic diseases that pose devastating threats in the Caribbean region and beyond"

— Dr. Sean Callanan

On Tuesday, July 10, 2018, RUSVM celebrated the Grand Opening of the Research and Pathology building. We welcomed a number of distinguished guests from the St. Kitts and Nevis government, Adtalem Global Education Board and CEO/President Lisa Wardell.

