



RLRI North Central 2026 Program Summary – Illinois

Friday Evening **January 23**

CVM Hosts **Drs. Ashley Propst & Lauren Charles**

Evening Challenge **Dr. Brian Aldridge**

Worship/Prayer **[Ben Bylsma](#)**

Saturday **January 24**

Praise & Worship 8:15am

[Ben Bylsma](#)

Devotional 8:45am

Dr. Russhawn Aldridge

Session One 9:30am

“My experience as a long-term short-term missionary to Honduras” - Dr. Dan Lohnes

Dr. Dan will have a PowerPoint presentation of his trips to Honduras with scriptural wisdom as a guide.

“Motherhood in veterinary medicine: a sweet synergy” – Dr. Briana Selleck

Being called to a life in veterinary medicine and a life of motherhood can be such a sweet and rewarding thing. It can also be something the devil can use to tear you apart. No two journeys down this path look the same but all are beautiful. Join us as we discuss navigating this journey and how to keep it focused on God through all the ups and downs.

“Paws, Purpose, and Progress: The Power of Mentorship in Veterinary Medicine” - Dr. Marjorie Clark

Unlock clinical confidence, career guidance, and burnout prevention for mentees; sharpen skills, build legacy, and spark innovation for mentors. Elevate patient care, retain talent, and strengthen One Health. Join us to forge resilience and excellence in vet med!

Session Two

10:30am

“Life Lesson I learned from Mongolian Veterinarians” – Dr. Dan Bieck

May of 2022, I took my first mission trip with CVM. I had been on a couple of other mission trips through my church, and all of them had been life-changing in different ways. However, during my mission trip with CVM to Mongolia, I learned a great deal about myself and my faith, and I also experienced a significant shift in my perspective on our profession. I learned that I need to change the style of medicine I practice and my relationships with my staff. I even need to change my perspective on the trials in my life. What I learned from the Mongolians I worked with has changed everything for the better.

“Learning to be content and giving thanks through it all” - Drs. Joshua Li and Laura Li

Count it all joy! (James 1:2). We will share our testimonies of God providing the paths for gratitude, joy, and leading us to contentment as husband and wife, parents, veterinarians, and as ambassadors for Christ wherever God has so graciously placed us.

“Balancing Life: Faith, Family, Work and the Kitchen Sink” – Dr. Lauren Charles**

There are a lot of aspects of your life that are constantly vying to be your top priority. We will never achieve a lasting balance that feels healthy for much more than a moment. “Balance” is an unrealistic goal, but “Balancing” is a practice we can continue to improve. Join us as we explore prioritizing and managing time well to work toward overall WellBeing.

Session Three

11:30am

“The God Who Walks With Us in the Waters” – Dr. Gina Wintermantel

Have you ever been through a time when you didn’t know if you could take one more step? Maybe it was grief, illness, or disappointment. Sometimes we imagine God watching from a distance—but Scripture tells a different story. God walks beside us. Let's explore His grace together.

“Ethics and the newly emerging "Ethical Fatigue" debate” - Dr. Diane Noll

An open forum discussion looking at the well-known issue of Compassion Fatigue and the new topic of Ethical fatigue as more and more ethical issues enter our practices every day, especially for the Christian Veterinarian.

“Calling and Career: Finding Purpose in Veterinary Medicine and Beyond” - Dr. Karren Eales**

Your Identity and worth are not defined by your performance, success, or title... but rooted in the One who called you. Veterinary medicine is a mission field, but not your only mission field. Your calling will evolve with time, both inside and outside the profession. How do we stay anchored in who we are and not just what we do.

Lunch & CVF Updates

12:30pm

Session Four

2:30pm

“Feeding the Flame and Passing on the Flame: A Look at Being Discipled and Discipling Others” - Dr. Cheryl Loken

Based on 2 Timothy and personal experiences, we'll look at how we grow in our faith and how to encourage others to grow in faith. Both are lifelong processes!

“Never Alone” – Dr. Emily Massie

The first year of practice can feel incredibly isolating and lonely. There are moments where you may feel like it is all on you and you alone, but with God in our lives, we are never alone. During this talk we will walk through why I left a job after only four months and how God walks beside us in everything we do.

“Transforming From Student Debt Stress to Financial Peace and Gratitude” – Dr. Brandon Scharping

Are you burdened by how much student debt you have accumulated? This talk will show you how NOT to conform to the "normal" lifestyle of dragging student debt around your entire life. God's will is for us to be happy and have a peaceful life. Transforming your mindset on how to destroy your student loans can set you up for success. Financial peace will allow you to focus on the work God has called you to do as a veterinarian, as well as living with a spirit of gratitude and giving generously throughout your life.

Session Five

3:30pm

Current Student Panel

Are you curious what it is like to be a vet student at the University of Illinois? Come ask current vet students about what their experiences are and have been while in school or preparing to come to Champaign-Urbana, IL.

Non-vet Family & Supporters Panel

Is your significant other, parent, friend, or other family member in the veterinary field and you're clueless about veterinary medicine? Come join the panel to learn about how we can support our loved ones in the field and support each other as non-veterinary family & friends.

New Grad Panel

Do you have questions about what the first few months after graduation look like? How to discern the path that God has for you? Come join us to ask questions and hear how God led these new grads.

Financial Q & A Panel

Join our financial panel to have a round table discussion about finances and the different approaches that are being taken to conquer student debt, cost of living, and other finances.

Illinois Vet School Tours

4:30pm

Dinner

6:30pm

Evening Challenge 7:30pm

“Grateful Through it All” - Dr. Ashley Propst

To close out our time together, Dr. Ashley Propst will share part of her testimony and how she has learned to be grateful through it all. Through the abundant joys and the tumultuous trials in our faith journey, we can learn to be grateful for all that God has provided.

Worship and Prayer 8:30pm

[Ben Bylsma](#)

Sunday	January 25
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Praise & Worship 8:30am

[Ben Bylsma](#)

Devotional & Closing 9:00am

Pastor Jeremy Rodriguez

****Sessions marked with two asterisks are pending RACE approval for 1 hour of CE**

