Mideast Professional RLRI

@ University of Tennessee

February 5, 2027

FRIDAY	
11:00am	Lunch and Introductions / Welcome by **Dr. Johanna Choate**
12:00-12:50 pm	**How do you define success?** *Dr. Sara Phipps* What does it mean to be a successful veterinarian? As a Christian is the definition different? Who doesn't want to be successful. Discussing what this looks like.
1:00-1:50pm	**Communication in Cross-Cultural Ministry** *Dr. J* Whether you are a vet explaining treatment options in the exam room or a parent discussing an issue with your child, most all of us have said something that was either not understood or- even worse- understood as being something totally different than what we are saying. We speak the same language and often have similar life experiences. When the other person has a different first language and culture, the chance of misunderstanding increases significantly. Effective communication involves more than just saying the right words, understanding the other person's perspective and how they interpret things can help the correct message be both transmitted and received.
1:50pm-2:05pm	Short Break/Fellowship
2:05-4:00pm	**The Cost of Caring** *Dr. Lauren Charles & Dr. Johanna Choate* In 2024, Barnas Creative produced a documentary exploring the challenges faced by veterinary professionals. This two-hour session will view sections of this documentary and pause to discuss the ways that our faith enables us to bear the cost of caring in practice. It will also explore the challenge of suicide within the veterinary profession and seek ways in which our faith invites us to engage with this difficult topic.
4:00pm	Debrief, Prayer, Adjourn to RLRI if attending

Christian Veterinary Mission

Speaker Bios

Sara Phipps, DVM

Dr. Sara Phipps graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine in 1997. She and her husband lived and worked with VetRed, in Bolivia for 5 years as missionaries with Christian Veterinary Mission (CVM). They returned to the USA in May of 2023. Sara still works as an associate with CVM and is the Director of VetRed, Santa Cruz. Sara currently works as an emergency veterinarian in Boone, NC. She also is an adjunct professor at Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine where she teaches surgical skills and emergency medicine. Dr. Phipps has her masters in integrative medicine and practices integrative medicine once a week. The Phipps live in Tennessee with their two dogs, a German Shepherd named Mildred and a Bassett Hound named Jimmy. The Phipps' have 6 grown children and 1 grandson.

J, DVM

In 2016, following nine years of general practice in a rural East Tennessee clinic, Justin and his family moved to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. For six and a half years, he worked alongside Mongolian veterinarians in a small animal clinic. Through day-in, day-out work at the clinic, he helped to train the national veterinarians in improving their knowledge, skills, and care for the animals that they were seeing. In October of 2022, he returned to the USA and joined the CVM staff where, among other things, he supports the work that CVM is doing in Asia.

Lauren Charles, DVM

Dr. Lauren Charles is a graduate of Auburn University, College of Veterinary Medicine, class of 2005. She grew up in Louisville, KY and lives there again now. After a number of short-term mission trips to Latin American countries, she lived and served in Bolivia from 2009-2012 with Christian Veterinary Mission, working primarily with veterinary students. Lauren adopted her daughter in Bolivia, then got married and came back to the US. They now also have 3 biological children, a son-in-law, and a granddaughter! She enjoys serving as CVM's Workplace and Student Ministries Director.

Johanna Choate, DVM

Johanna is a 2011 graduate of Auburn University. Originally from Kentucky, she first connected with CVM during vet school where she was active in the local CVF group. After graduation, she returned to Kentucky and worked in a mixed animal practice for over a decade before transitioning to academia, where she taught in a veterinary technology program until God called her to full-time ministry with CVM as the Mideast Region Rep in 2026. She currently resides in Kentucky with her husband Luke and their three beautiful children.