Abounding

April 2019

Have you ever tried to guess how many fruit snacks 175 people will eat in a weekend? How are you at estimating how many bottled waters that group might drink over two days? Have you had to decide what percentage of your vet students will want pickles on their Chick-fil-a sandwich? If you passed these tests, you’re pretty much qualified to be a CVM Region Rep!

Over the past two months, I’ve been away from home for six weekends. Between representing CVM at four veterinary continuing education conferences around the Southeast and hosting two of our own Real Life Real Impact retreat weekends, I’ve logged a lot of miles and probably as many hugs. There have been the seemingly mundane chores of coordinating hotel rooms, setting up CVM booths, and navigating the dietary restrictions and preferences of nearly 300 people. These are fairly trivial tasks, but you would be surprised how much the wrong roommate or an unwanted pickle on a sandwich can ruin someone’s day. Such details set the tone for an event and show that we truly care.

But far more important than the organizational details of the past couple months, have been the connections. Connecting with dear friends from long ago and reconnecting with friends I made just weeks before at one of my other events. Also, meeting brand new vet students and bonding over our shared love for veterinary medicine and Jesus. Creating relationships and memories that will last.

As I’ve been traveling, I’ve been sharing about our annual theme of Hope from Hebrews 6:19, “We have this hope as an anchor for our souls, firm and secure.” I’ve mentioned before that the veterinary world is sorely in need of hope, as our suicide rate is reportedly higher than any other profession. “Wellness” is being widely promoted through ideas as simple as adding hammocks, corn hole boards, and ping pong tables to vet school campuses, and also as deep as focusing entire tracks at conferences to the subject.

I’ve attended sessions addressing wellness recently, and as Dr. Troy Sammons, one of our CVM vets in South Sudan noticed, some of the lectures are missing the mark so much that they may be doing more harm than good. I don’t believe that yoga with puppies, or goats, is inherently harmful, although putting our hope in surface level solutions like a momentary reprieve will leave us seeking another fix shortly thereafter.
However, a suggestion I’ve seen as potentially dangerous is one about positive self-talk. In one lecture the speaker had us repeat out loud with him, “I am enough,” and “Even with all my mistakes I am a good person.” These statements do seem innocent, but repeating those lines to yourself will not make them true or you well. You are not enough, neither am I. I don’t believe that any of us are really good people. It’s not until we acknowledge this and recognize our own brokenness, that we become open to true healing by the only good person, and the only One who is enough--Jesus Christ.

The healing, wellness, and hope that Jesus offers is why I continue to leave my family weekend after weekend to share with those who might not know or may be overdue for a reminder. The veterinary profession doesn’t need a Band-Aid to cover the wound; we need a Physician who can heal us. Our only true Hope is found in Christ.

With Hope in Him,
Lauren

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the Way and the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father except through me.’”
- John 14:6

Jon, Lauren, Angie and Isaiah Charles
lcharles@cvmusa.org
spendyourselves.blogspot.com

Contributions are solicited with the understanding that the donee organization has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.