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University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine Lauded for Ending Terminal Animal Surgery Course

(USNEWSWIRE) Jenkintown, PA— The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) today applauds the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine for eliminating the last remaining small animal terminal surgery course for students at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) in Philadelphia, PA.

Third year veterinary students previously had the option to take a surgical laboratory course that required the euthanasia of two dogs and one cat. Students would perform one 'survival' surgery on the animals and then follow-up with a terminal surgery in which the animals were euthanized while under general anesthesia. However, that has now changed.

Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Dorothy Brown, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons, who recently took over teaching the course, Penn students who take the Small Animal Surgery/Medicine/Anesthesia Laboratory no longer euthanize their patients. Based on her surveys of past students, Dr. Brown restructured the course to emphasize "the more common and useful soft tissue procedures."

According to Dr. Brown, in previous years, approximately 40 dogs and 20 cats were euthanized for the course. This year, each student will practice by using one dog and one cat, and by spaying one dog from the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). Animals involved in the procedures should not experience any negative, long-term effects from the surgery. The animals will then be available for adoption either through the veterinary school or the SPCA.

Penn has joined other veterinary schools such as the Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine in North Grafton, Massachusetts and the Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine in Pomona, California, by making its curriculum more humane and focusing on students' needs. According to Dr. Brown, "Improving the course for students and animals alike was my goal." "My impression is that the students found the course to be a valuable learning experience. All of the dogs and cats used in the course were ultimately adopted."

"We support Dr. Brown and the University of Pennsylvania in their progress to help animals and instill a sense of compassion and responsibility within their students, said Tina Nelson, AAVS Executive Director. "It is our hope that other veterinary schools will adopt the same policy."

The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) is a non-profit animal advocacy and educational organization dedicated to ending experiments on animals in research, testing, and education. Founded in Philadelphia in 1883, AAVS is the oldest organization in the United States dedicated to eliminating experiments on animals. AAVS pursues its objectives through legal and effective advocacy, education, and support of the development of non-animal alternative methods.

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