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A Letter from the NYSAVT President...

2019 has been a year of growth and adjustment for NYSAVT. As is the case for many things in life, true growth doesn't come without some degree of challenge, but what often results from the journey is a better outcome. For NYSAVT, the last 12 months has brought changes in association management, board members and strategy for reaching more of our constituent LVTs across the state.

Following the 2019 Spring Seminar, the executive board engaged in extensive discussion and analysis of where the association stood in terms of membership outreach, partnerships and initiatives with allied veterinary associations and messaging, and determined that a change in association management was necessary for advancing the mission of advocating for and representing licensed veterinary technicians on a wider scale across the state. NYSAVT has partnered with Capitol Hill Management Services, a proven national leader in association management to help improve administrative and membership services.

A call for nominations and elections were held in June. NYSAVT is happy to welcome Alyse Retallick, BS, LVT as its newly elected Secretary. Alyse is a part of the professional staff in the Veterinary Technology Science program at SUNY Delhi and has served as the program's NYSAVT Student Chapter Advisor for several years. Alyse replaces Denise Lenhart, BS, LVT who will serve as NYSAVT Co-District Representative for the Mid-Hudson region along with Donna Meier, BS, LVT who recently completed her term as NYSAVT Immediate Past President.

2019-20 NYSAVT Executive Board

President: Garnetta Santiago, MA, LVT
Vice President: Sara Zingaro, MS, LVT
Secretary: Alyse Retallick, BS, LVT
Treasurer: Thomas Heckel, BS, LVT

Additionally, Ann Wagner, LVT was appointed NYSAVT District Representative for the Western District, encompassing Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara and Wyoming counties.

Over the last year NYSAVT committed resources and efforts to grow awareness of and advocate on behalf of NYS LVTs in several ways:

Promoting public awareness of the role of LVT on the veterinary healthcare team:

- Booth presence at the 5th Annual Puppy Up (New Paltz, NY – Sept 2018) to promote the role of veterinary technicians in treating canine cancer patients;
- Participants in the Kingston Sunrise Rotary's 3rd Mutt Strutt, in conjunction with the SUNY Ulster Vet Tech Program
- Promoted Veterinary Technician careers at 5 high school career fair events

Advocating for protection of NYS LVTs

- Reiterated NYSAVT's Official Statement regarding the Veterinary Nurse Initiative to NAVTA

Rebuilding partnerships and communications with NYSVMS:

- Recognizing that while we are separate entities, we are mutually dependent and critical to the advancement of veterinary medicine in New York State

Supporting NYS Veterinary Technician Students:

- Hosted 2nd annual NYSAVT Student Summit at SUNY Delhi, a day-long, student-only event designed to give students opportunities to network, participate in professional development discussions and learn from technicians currently serving in a variety of areas of veterinary medicine.

Long-term Planning:

- Dates and locations have been secured for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 Spring Seminars, which serves to provide advanced notice and planning opportunities to members about speakers and topics.

There are boundless opportunities for us as a profession. And my faith in our shared ability to raise public awareness of the crucial position we hold as gatekeepers of animal and public health is as strong as ever. Ours is not a profession without issues, but our collective dedication to excellence in veterinary care, research, education and industry means we don't give up. New York State's mandated legislative guidelines and protections for our title, scope of practice and profession provides us with a framework within which we can boldly move forward. NYSAVT is and always will be committed to upholding and advocating for the enforcements provided LVTs.

I am immensely honored to serve our association and members in this capacity. But I also recognize that an Executive Board of four dedicated individuals can't do all the work that needs to be done. Have ideas? Interested in serving as a District Rep? Email or call – this is your state association! Get involved!

While attending the pinning ceremony for the Alfred State College 2019 Veterinary Technology Program graduating class in May, I felt a deep sense of excitement for the future of our profession watching the students being recognized individually and taking their oath. Our new graduates across the state embody the promise of continued advancement and excellence and as New York State Licensed Veterinary Technicians, we should all be proud to celebrate in that!

Excelsior!

Garnetta Santiago, MA, LVT