Nine Educational Models Studied by over 160 Veterinary Medical Education Stakeholders at Second NAVMEC National Meeting

(3 May 2010 – KANSAS CITY, MO) A diverse representation of veterinary organizations and individuals completed three days of meetings today to examine current educational models and create new, enhanced versions for educating veterinarians of the future. The models examined by participants included eight programs which are currently in practice around the globe and one new, “out of the box” concept. The meeting was the second of three National Meetings, part of a year-long effort to chart the course for the future of veterinary medical education. The North American Veterinary Medical Education Consortium, or NAVMEC, was launched by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) in collaboration with its partners in 2009 to ensure that veterinary medical education meets the changing needs of society.

“NAVMEC is the first project ever to bring experts from all areas of the veterinary field, including representatives from veterinary medical education curriculum development, accreditation, testing and licensure together to promote comprehensive, meaningful change in the education system,” said Mary Beth Leininger, DVM. “Our meeting in Kansas City included a full day of thought-provoking presentations about existing education innovations from within veterinary and human medicine as well as dentistry. The goal was to learn important curriculum and delivery options that could be integrated to assure that future veterinarians are well prepared to serve society while being adequately rewarded for their work.”

Educational models from eight different schools, as well as a newly created conceptual model, were studied at the meeting. Attendees were divided into teams that were tasked with evaluating, “deconstructing” and then “reconstructing” veterinary medical education models to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

During the opening session for the second meeting, Dean Bennie Osburn, DVM, Ph.D., University of California, Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and Chairman of the NAVMEC Board of Directors, acknowledged numerous requests made by NAVMEC participants that the Consortium identify a plan to implement the recommendations of the Consortium resulting from the three National Meetings. He announced that the NAVMEC Board decided to include a recommendation on implementation in the Consortium’s final report which will be submitted to the AAVMC Board of Directors.

At the third meeting, participants will review and discuss the relationship between education, accreditation, testing and licensure as well as provide input on potential ways in which the recommendations of the Consortium could be implemented.
A comprehensive outcomes report and executive summary from the second meeting will be available upon review and approval by the NAVMEC Board of Directors and will be available at www.navmec.org. The outcomes report and executive summary from the first meeting, which studied shifting societal needs and core competencies needed in the profession, is already available on the site.

“We realize that change in professional education does not come easily, but with new learning technologies, shifting demands on the services provided by clinical practitioners and an ever greater need for the profession to protect and promote food security and safety, public health and research, the nation’s 28 veterinary medical colleges must act with speed and focus,” said Dean Osburn, DVM, Ph.D. “Onward now to the third National Meeting—our most critical—that will seek ways that accreditation, licensure and testing can support the efforts needed to allow veterinary medical education to evolve.”

Who Is Part of NAVMEC?

In order to produce as comprehensive an outcome as possible, AAVMC invited the participation of close to 400 groups and organizations with an interest in veterinary medical education. A total of approximately 200 groups and individuals have joined the Consortium, including co-sponsors who have made some financial contribution to help underwrite NAVMEC infrastructure and other groups and individuals wishing to participate in discussions. Both co-sponsors and partner organizations are invited to send a representative to the three National Meetings that are planned throughout 2010.

Those groups and individuals making a financial contribution are designated “co-sponsors.” All co-sponsors have been invited to name a representative who would not only participate at the National Meetings, but are also invited to be part of an Advisory Panel that will help plan the National Meetings, make recommendations concerning the organization of Consortium meetings, regularly review the progress of the Consortium, and make recommendations to the Consortium Board of Directors as the final “national report” is being drafted for submission to the AAVMC Board of Directors.

The participants include AAVMC national and international member institutions; accreditation, licensure and testing groups; national veterinary associations from the U.S., Canada and Brazil; state veterinary medical associations; veterinary industry; veterinary species and specialty organizations; animal welfare/activist groups; ancillary veterinary entities; and individuals interested in veterinary medical education.

How is NAVMEC Governed?

AAVMC launched NAVMEC in 2009 and is providing the leadership for this initiative. The NAVMEC Board of Directors, representing the three pillars of NAVMEC—education, accreditation and testing/licensure—will make final decisions concerning NAVMEC policies, procedures and outcome that will be recommended to the AAVMC Board of Directors.

The nine person NAVMEC Board is designed to support significant and meaningful advances in veterinary medical education. It's the first Board ever comprised equally of representatives of
licensure/testing, education and accreditation—the entities most responsible for addressing societal needs that veterinarians will face.

The final meeting is scheduled for July 14-16, 2010 and will return to the Oquendo Center in Las Vegas. It seeks to offer a synthesis of the meetings and to include implications for accreditation, licensure and testing and how these regulatory bodies will need to embrace change for meaningful veterinary medical education reforms to be successful.

About NAVMEC

NAVMEC is the most comprehensive effort ever undertaken to create a workforce of next generation veterinarians who are ready to address some of society’s greatest needs, taking into account educational models, accreditation, testing and licensing. On the Web: www.navmec.org.

About AAVMC

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) is a non-profit membership organization working to protect and improve the health and welfare of animals, people and the environment by generating new knowledge and preparing the high quality veterinary workforce needed to meet continually changing societal demands for veterinary expertise. AAVMC provides leadership for and promotes excellence in academic veterinary medicine to prepare the veterinary workforce with the scientific knowledge and skills required to meet societal needs through the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health and the advancement of medical knowledge. On the Web: www.aavmc.org.

# # #