



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BOVINE PRACTITIONERS

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## **AABP Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference Provided “Keys to Unlocking Longevity”**

*Conference attendees discovered how to use their skills to increase their longevity in bovine practice.*

(ASHLAND, OHIO) February 16, 2024 – AABP members who are recent veterinary graduates were inspired to confidence at the 2024<sup>th</sup> Annual AABP Recent Graduate Conference held Feb. 9-10 in Knoxville, Tenn. In-person attendance was limited to AABP members who graduated veterinary school eight or fewer years ago. Supporting the theme of “Keys to Unlocking Longevity”, keynote speaker Dr. Marissa Hake (also known as Dr. Hake – Calf Vet on her popular Facebook page) discussed “Good Husbandry of the Cow Vet”, and how to support the human side of cattle veterinary medicine.

The conference offered 15.5 RACE-approved CE credits, and sessions for general interest, beef and dairy, clinical skills, practice management, and small ruminant/swine sessions were offered, in addition to four preconference seminars. A milk quality preconference seminar was held at the University of Tennessee dairy, the University of Tennessee beef farm was the site of the hands-on bull breeding soundness seminar, and the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine was the site of the lameness protocols/hoof-trimming seminar. Also offered was a practice management seminar on starting a practice or buying in/buying out.

The program committee, consisting of Dr. Nick Shen (Program Chair and AABP Emerging Leader), Dr. Ryan Wood (dairy), Dr. Rachel O’ Leary (dairy) and Dr. Andy Harding (beef), matched the demographic of attendees. “The 2024 AABP Recent Graduate Conference was a great success,” said Program Chair Dr. Nick Shen. “We had a record number of attendees, delicious meals sponsored by great companies, lots of companies represented at the trade show, a phenomenal speaker line-up that went over hot topics under the radar for recent graduate bovine veterinarians.”

The 2024 RG Conference program committee’s theme and ultimate goal was to provide attendees “keys” to unlocking longevity in bovine practice, Shen added. “To accomplish this, we kicked the conference off with Dr. Marissa Hake’s ice-breaking abilities followed by various different presentations on how to tap into this longevity.” Throughout the conference, various topics were discussed to allow attendees to learn and take home skills that can be implemented immediately in both beef and dairy practice that will benefit their clients.

“This conference continues to get better each year, both in terms of the great CE offered but also attendance by our recent graduate members,” noted AABP Executive Director Dr. Fred Gingrich. “Our goals for this conference each year is to provide AABP resources targeted to newly graduated members, connect them to AABP, provide networking opportunities for their peers, and inspire them to remain in bovine practice.”

The conference closed with insightful presentations on disaster management from Dr. Tera Barnhardt who has been in the trenches on the national stage. “This was a great lead into our final presentation by Dr. Blaine Melody who allowed us to humble ourselves down, reflect and learn that any obstacles that we run into as new graduate bovine veterinarians are not new,” Shen said. “We are not alone in this profession. The

sacrifices we make on a personal level can be great to say the least, but we have each other as colleagues to fall back on when we need each other. We, as veterinarians, have each other's back."

### **Conference stats**

This year's conference stats were impressive. There were 213 conference attendees who were recent graduates, 31 speakers, 40 exhibitor personnel representing 24 companies/organizations, plus AABP leadership and VIPs for a total of 258 in attendance. As far as the attendees' demographics, 72% of attendees graduated in 2021-2023, 75% were female, 25% were male, and the University of Wisconsin had the most alums present (second was the University of Tennessee).

The Recent Veterinary Graduate Conference was launched in 2018 as a result of the different needs of AABP members who are recent graduates, many of whom are unable to attend the AABP Annual Conference in the fall. "Energy and excitement emanated from the attendees of this year's Recent Grad conference," said AABP President Dr. Michael Capel. "The planning committee did an excellent job with the program, and the theme 'Keys to Unlocking Longevity' was spot on. I applaud their forward thinking in selecting presentations that addressed physical, mental and practice health issues." Capel added that preconference seminars provided practical, hands-on knowledge that could be incorporated quickly into practice and were topics that pushed the audience to think more deeply. "This conference is an excellent place for recent graduates to reconnect with former classmates and to forge new friendships," he said.

Registrants and AABP members can access the RACE-approved recorded presentations as a free member benefit through the Beef Cattle Institute website accessible at <https://aabp.org>.

#2024RG

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*AABP is a membership-based, not-for-profit organization serving cattle veterinary medicine professionals across the United States, Canada and other countries. Visit <https://aabp.org> and like us on Facebook.*

*The 2024 57<sup>th</sup> AABP Annual Conference will be held September 12-14 in Columbus, Ohio*

*The 2025 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Recent Graduate Conference will be held Feb. 14-15, Norman, Oklahoma*