



First and foremost I would like to express how grateful, and honored I am to have been elected president of this important organization for this year 2020, the start of a new decade. If you would have told me upon graduating vet school, that one day I would be elected president of the World Aquatic Veterinary Association, I would have seriously wondered what sort of Pufferfish toxin was poisoning your thinking! It just goes to show you that you never know what avenue a degree in veterinary medicine might open for you, and that we must always be willing to travel the road less taken. I believe, these are the roads which have the potential to bring us to the greatest rewards. Because after all, if it were easy, everyone would do it, and as aquatic animal veterinarians, we are certainly all willing to be

brave in the face of the many unknowns which are associated with the unique patients we treat. When people wonder and marvel that such thing as a fish vet even exists, I like to then pile it on by asking, "How many species of dogs are there? How many of cats? Horses? ONE! Yet there are over 55,000 or so species of fish, so digest that for a moment! From fish to invertebrates, to marine mammals, and all kinds of fascinating water dwelling creatures in between, the importance of the aquatic veterinary is clear. We need people who know how to care for these unique creatures, especially in the face of environmental and population challenges, in order to keep more of these creatures and people, safe and healthy. It is difficult to express how grateful I am to have been drawn to the field of aquatic animal medicine. I so enjoy my patients, my clients, and my colleagues, who are some of the most brilliant scientists in the world, in my humble opinion. And to express my gratitude, I promise to do my very best to lead this organization into the future, in the best way I can, to make it easier, more enjoyable, and more productive for all of us as we move into this new decade.

One of the greatest advantages and privileges that I will be able to utilize is the addition of an administrative assistant team. Together we will work together throughout the year, to help streamline the organization, keep us on task, and help propel us into the future. My goals for us for the year are to keep meetings on time, develop a calendar along with the admin which will help us to quickly and easily reference tasks to be completed in a timely manner, and to see to it that our yearly general meetings are planned 2-3 years in advance. It is a lot to do, along with all the other tasks which will inevitably come along. However, I am committed to helping propel WAVMA to be the number one go-to organization in the world for all things related to aquatic veterinary medicine. I believe we are well on our way to achieving that goal. Since 2015 we have certified 103 aquatic veterinarians, and have 60 more in progress. I see the CertAqV program is one of our greatest accomplishments, helping to create a pathway for students interested in aquatic animal medicine to follow their dreams.

We are an organization of good people, willing to accomplish amazing things to promote aquatic veterinary medicine around the world. Hopefully soon will be the day when everyone knows that yes there is such a thing as a fish vet. We can and will continue to grow the profession and do even more for the world's fish health, safety, and welfare,

including more diagnostic testing options, more therapeutic treatment options, and more veterinarian versed in and comfortable with aquatic animal medicine.

Please feel free to email me personally at any time during the year, for thoughts, comments, and/or suggestions for ways to improve our organization.

Additionally, it goes without saying that an organization is nothing but the sum of the people who devote their time to it. Not because they are being paid to do so, but because they feel like it is the right thing to do. If you value WAVMA, but have not committed to joining committees, or attending meetings, please, this is the year we need to hear from YOU! The future of aquatic veterinary medicine, and how quickly it spreads around the world, is up to us. Won't you please join me, and commit that this year, 2020, will be the year that YOU are a most active participant in the activities of WAVMA? We need and want your input, expertise, and experience, no matter how significant, every voice matters and makes a difference.