



WVLDI

Women of Vetlandia

How to Find Personal and Professional Success in Organized Veterinary Medicine

Supported by:



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Women

- The majority of the veterinary profession in 2014
- Under-represented among practice owners, corporate board members, national leaders in professional organizations - groups that help shape and define the veterinary profession
- A group with unique and diverse interests, perspectives and skills
- The people that the WVDLI is dedicated to promoting into leadership roles as we strive to find strength through diversity in every area of the profession



WVLDI

Vetlandia /vet land' ia/ *noun*


- Our homeland, where the veterinary profession lives and works
- Citizenship is earned by virtue of a degree
- A place where everyone is entitled to an opinion, but...
- It has a decentralized government where not everybody has a voice



Organized Veterinary Medicine



Why is it important to be active outside of your day job?

- Veterinary medicine is your profession
 - Advance your career opportunities
 - Networking
 - Build new personal relationships
 - Make your professional life more interesting and fulfilling
 - Expand your life and experiences beyond the office
 - It is a part of who you are
- 

Organizational Leadership



So...where's the problem?

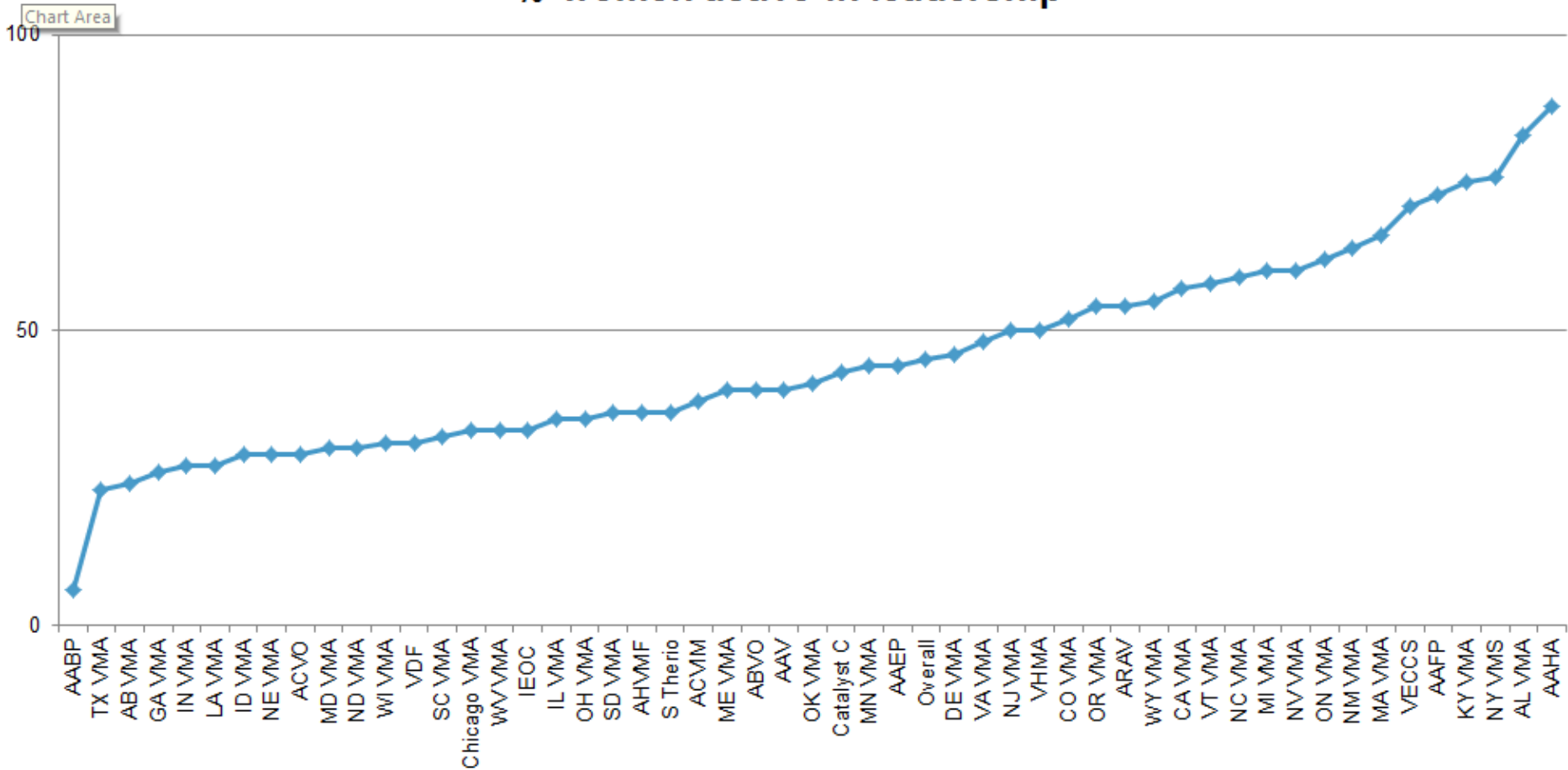


Organizational Leadership



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% women active in leadership





The Problem



We need to address the gap! Large numbers of women in the profession and small numbers of women in decision and policy-making roles:

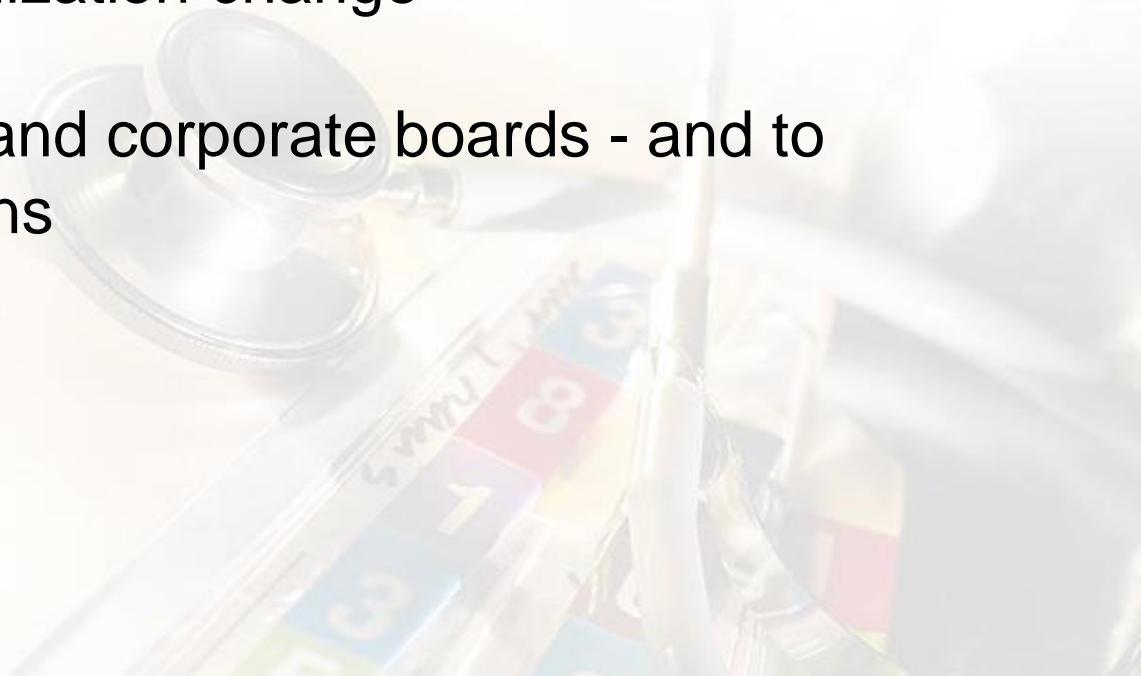
- Develop female leaders in veterinary organizations
- Educate male and female veterinarians on the value of female leadership
- Address the structural barriers to women in these leadership roles
- Get the conversation started



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Research shows that when 30% of a group is made up of women, the discourse, values, profitability, and working style of the entire organization change

This applies to politics and corporate boards - and to professional associations



Organized Veterinary Medicine



In organized veterinary medicine, AVMA is the major leagues



...but not the only game in town



State VMAs

Species groups

Many others



Organized Veterinary Medicine



Professional organizations tend to follow various templates to identify leaders

Hierarchical structures based on:

- **Baseball (local → state → national)**
- **Earning your stripes – experience/reputation**
- **Age - wisdom of the elders(?)**
- **Indicators of status**
- **Established relationships**
- **Enthusiasm**



However...



...like American Express tells you



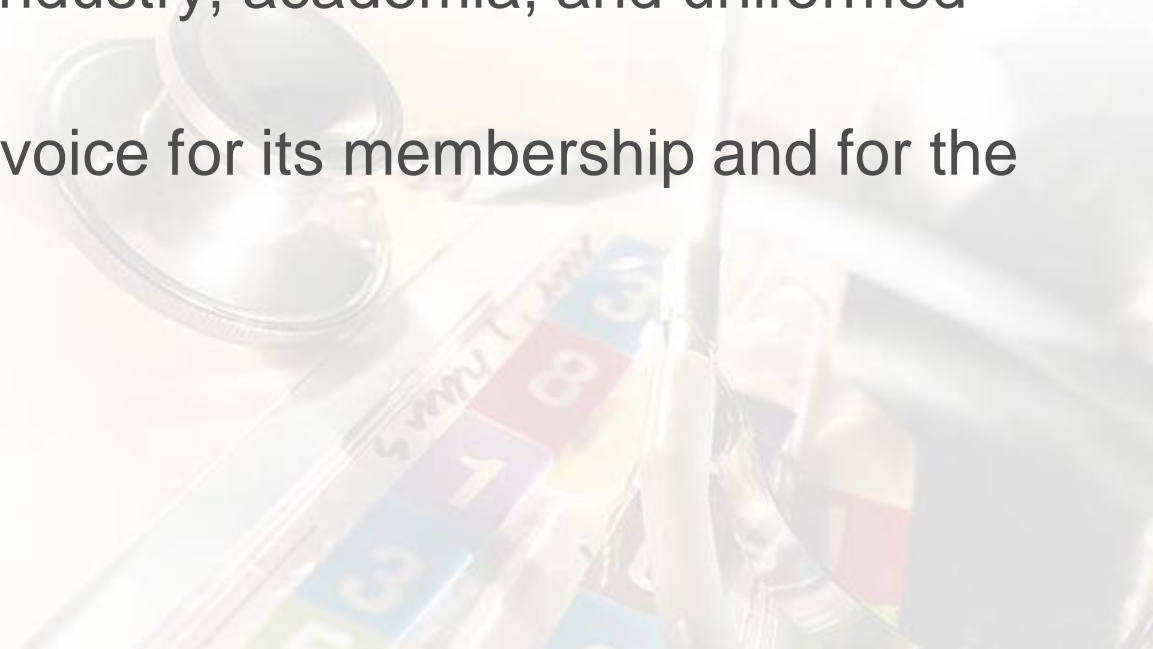
membership has its privileges



AVMA



- The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), established in 1863, is a not-for-profit association representing veterinarians working in private and corporate practice, government, industry, academia, and uniformed services.
- AVMA is the collective voice for its membership and for the profession.





AVMA



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- While AVMA and other professional organizations don't make law or treat animals, they play very important roles in developing policy for the veterinary profession and directing its evolution.
- AVMA is a member organization that acts partly as a federation (an association of associations) through the representation of state and allied organizations in the House of Delegates.
- Members are privileged to participate – and to lead



AVMA structure – EB



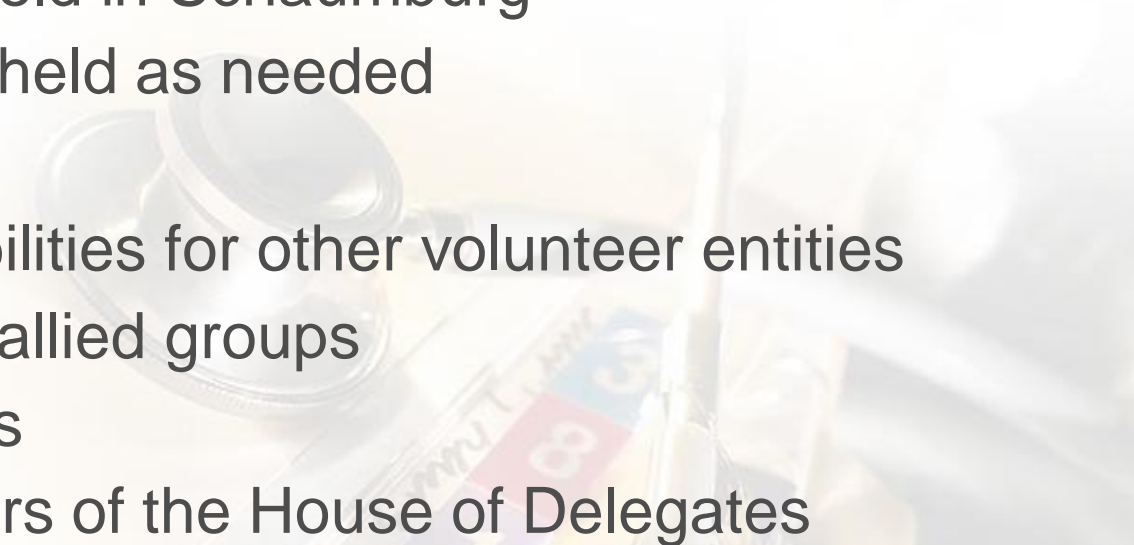
Executive Board

- District Directors (6-year term)
 - Geographic representation (11 districts)
 - Elected by the members in the district
- Officers
 - President-elect/President/Immediate Past-President
 - Elected by the House of Delegates
 - Vice-president (2-year term)
 - Student-focused responsibilities
 - Elected by the House of Delegates
 - Treasurer (1-year term, can serve 6 consecutive terms)
- SAVMA representative (president)



AVMA structure – EB



- Executive Board
 - Meet 6-8 times a year in person
 - 3 of these are held around Convention and VLC meetings
 - 3-day meetings held in Schaumburg
 - Teleconferences held as needed
 - Other duties
 - Liaison responsibilities for other volunteer entities
 - Liaisons with the allied groups
 - Board committees
 - Ex-officio members of the House of Delegates
- 



AVMA structure - HOD



House of Delegates

- “The House of Delegates shall be the principal body within the Association responsible for establishing policy and providing direction for matters relating to veterinary medicine...”
- Expansive charge
- Broad expertise among the members of the HOD
- Interesting and important issues raised and debated
- Minimal interaction within the HOD between meetings
- Responsibility for two-way communication with members
 - Individual members
 - Represented group



AVMA structure - HOD




House of Delegates


- Delegates representing state and allied organizations
- One delegate/one alternate (4-year terms)
- Selected by the organization
 - Direct member elections
 - Elected by the board of directors
 - Term-limited or not
- Meet twice a year – convention and VLC
- Travel expenses paid by AVMA, other expenses covered by some of the represented organizations
- Formal process for decision-making



AVMA structure - HOD



- The HOD needs diversity
 - What is valuable to you as a volunteer:
 - Opportunity to travel to 2 meetings a year
 - Technical training in how meetings run
 - Experience in debate, stating your point of view and reaching consensus
 - Developing your personal network
- 



AVMA structure – “The Entities”




- **Councils and Committees**

- Councils elected through the HOD
- Committees elected by the EB
- 3-year terms, eligible for two terms

- **Task Forces and Working Groups appointed through EB**

- Process is specified in the charge
- Sunset after completion of the task

- **Trusts**

- GHLIT and the PLIT
 - Appointed by the EB
- 
- A large, faded background image of a stethoscope and binder tabs is visible on the right side of the slide, partially overlapping the text.



AVMA structure – Staff



Staff

- ~140 staff members
 - ~ 40 veterinarians
 - Schaumburg office
 - Government Relations Division (Washington, DC)
 - Organized into divisions to support the organization, the mission and volunteer entity activities
 - Staff does the heavy lifting – volunteers establish policy and direction for the organization
- 



Allied Organizations



- Special Interest groups of organized veterinary medicine – by species, roles, specialty
- Geographical location and length of service not seen as impediments to leadership
 - can be more conducive to participation as veterinarians move through to their career
- Knowledge and commitment to the field highly regarded

Allied Organizations



- Usually starts with committee work
- Often more phone calls and remote work rather than in-person meetings due to geography
- Service terms generally shorter
- Increased ability to fill AVMA Council and Committee positions due to advocacy
- Impact felt nationally rather than locally
- Hard to work towards AVMA EB positions due to geographic voting for District Directors

Volunteering— where to begin?



- **Start with identifying your personal interests and potential availability**
 - You don't need the ultimate skill set
 - You'll grow into the responsibilities
 - Ask questions about the time commitment
- **Start locally - local or state VMA**
- **Visit avma.org**
 - Home page
 - Volunteer opportunities page
- **Call or write for information**
- **Find mentors**
- **Contact WVLDI for advice!**



[How Do I Become a Volunteer?](#)

[Current Volunteer Opportunities](#)



[What Does an AVMA Volunteer Do?](#)




[Who Can Volunteer?](#)



[Why Should I Become a Volunteer?](#)

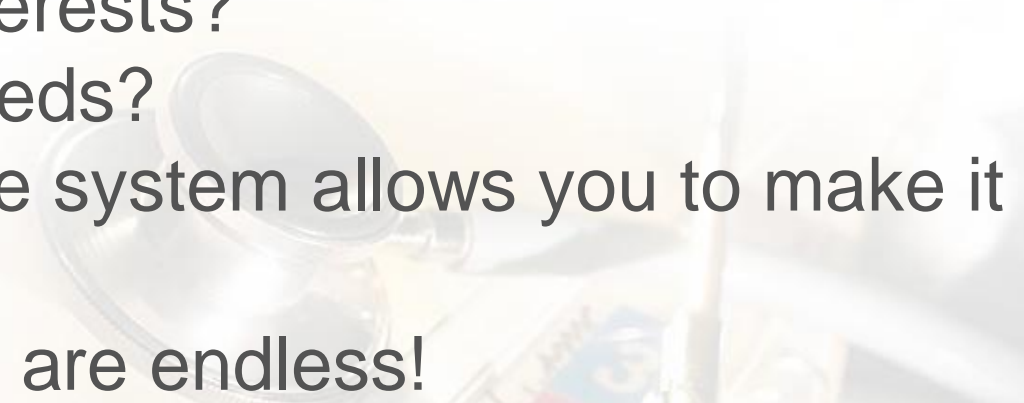



[When/Where Would I Be Needed?](#)



Leadership Opportunities Closer to Home



- Attend local or state VMA meetings and meet your leaders.
 - Ask about joining a committee or task force.
 - What are your interests?
 - What are your needs?
 - Working within the system allows you to make it better...
 - The opportunities are endless!
- 



Leadership Opportunities Closer to Home



Some potential areas of involvement with local and state VMAs:

- Animal welfare
- CE/conference
- Research
- Practice management
- Recent graduate
- Shelter medicine
- Technician oversight
- Disaster preparedness
- Public health
- Government relations/legislative
- Budget and finance
- Public relations
- Peer assistance
- Awards
- Species-specific practice (bovine, equine, companion animal, etc.)

Your interests will change, evolve and expand as you move through your career.



Leadership Opportunities Closer to Home



WVLDI

Get involved locally or at the state level and make an impact!





AVMA - leadership development



- **Veterinary Leadership Conference (VLC)**
 - Held each January in downtown Chicago
 - HOD organizations send emerging leaders
 - AVMA (through the ECDC) offers scholarships to interested members
 - Terrific training and networking opportunity
 - **Emerging Leaders Program**
 - Competitive application process
 - Year-long project approached cooperatively with the other members
 - Hands-on staff and volunteer mentoring
- 



AVMA - leadership development



- **Early Career Development Committee (ECDC)**
 - Appointed by the EB chair from nominations (you can self-nominate)
 - Helps develop resources to assist AVMA members early in their careers
 - Creates networking opportunities within the Early Career Online Community
 - Actively engages recent graduates to elicit discussions and gather feedback

AVMA Online Communities



- **Linked In group**



AVMA Online Communities



- **Early Career Online Community (ECOC)**

- Close Facebook group launched in 2012
- For AVMA members within 5 years of graduation
- Helps develop resources to assist AVMA members early in their careers
- Discussion on professional and personal concerns that affect you as a recent graduate





Find Us!



- **Facebook**



- **Linked In**



- **Twitter**



- **Website: womenveterinarians.org**



Where will you go in Vetlandia?

