



Director's Note

To kick off the new year, the UC Davis VGL has implemented a few ideas to improve our client experience. We started the new year by offering a 10% off promotion and many of our clients took advantage of this opportunity! Stay tuned for more of these promotions in the future.

We also made changes to our sample submission process for dogs. Clients who order genetic tests with us and request our cytology brushes will now receive pre-labelled brushes and a DNA collection brochure with instructions and tips for obtaining high quality DNA samples from their dogs. We hope that this helps make sample collection easier and this continues to positively impact our turnaround times.

We are also excited to again participate in many in person events that contribute to our research and educational mission. Our faculty, staff and students have also been busy sharing results from our ongoing research studies at scientific meetings and we have participated in several outreach events. As part of our mission, we are proud to support undergraduate, graduate and visiting students to train the next generation of geneticists.

In addition, Winter and Spring quarters will be filled with many other outreach events and our team is looking forward to sharing their knowledge of genetic testing with the community. Check out our main upcoming events below. We hope to visit with many of our clients at some of these events.

Thank you for trusting the VGL for your genetic testing needs.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Bellone

Rebecca Bellone, PhD
Director, Veterinary Genetics Laboratory

Need a genetic test for your dog?

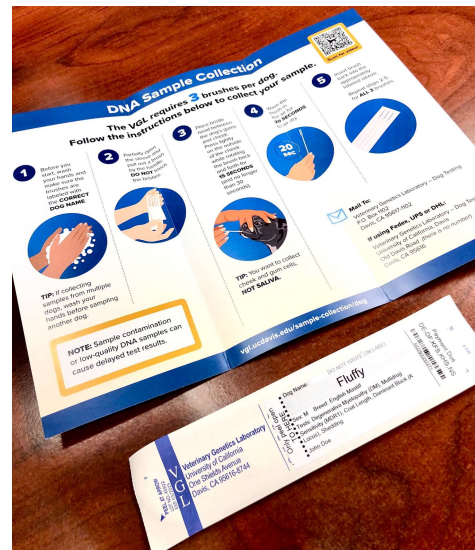


We will send you a DNA collection kit for no additional charge!

This is what you'll receive when you select sample choice B at checkout:

PRE-LABELLED swabs
(one set of 3 brushes per dog)

DNA collection brochure
(with instructions and tips!)



New Tests

The VGL launched a new dog test in January:

GM2 Gangliosidosis in the Toy Poodle



[GM2 gangliosidosis](#) is a fatal neurodegenerative lysosomal storage disease that affects dogs. A genetic variant causing GM2 gangliosidosis has been identified in certain lineages of Toy Poodles. The disease is inherited in an autosomal recessive manner, meaning that two

Communications and Outreach

Plant & Animal Genome Conference

VGL faculty, staff, and students attended this year's [Plant and Animal Genome \(PAG\) conference](#), which took place in San Diego, California, January 13-18.



Photo: Members of our Equine, Canine, and Alpaca research teams.

copies of the disease variant are needed to express disease.

Research Highlights



A [study](#) resulting from a global collaboration that included VGL's Dr. Robert Grahn and genotyped over 1000 random-bred cats from all over the world was published in November 2022. The study was led by [Dr. Leslie Lyons](#) and supported the origin of cat domestication in the Near East and found that the population diversity is in line with migration patterns of humans.

Upcoming Events

Winter Conference & Annual WAAM/AEMC Wildlife and Exotic Animal Symposium

The Center for Continuing Professional Education is hosting both the 9th Annual Winter Conference and the 38th Annual WAAM/AEMC Wildlife and Exotic Animal Symposium together in one weekend: February 25th - 26th, 2023. Information about the program and registration can be found [here](#).



Photo: Members of the Mammalian Ecology and Conservation Research Team

Our team presented 5 talks and 4 posters that detailed several of our ongoing studies, including coat color in alpacas and horses, congenital stationary night blindness in horses, evaluation of new technologies for variant discovery and diagnostic testing across species, and genome-wide sequencing approaches that are enabling a better understanding of gray foxes.

This year, our research team was also joined by one of our generous donors, **Mr. Greg Davis**, founder of Making Pegasus, whose goal is to create the "ultimate horse" by understanding all aspects of its biology and from this neutral platform acquaint humanity with the 3 most important concepts in all of consciousness: 1) Infinite Experience is the ultimate meaning of existence; 2) Liberty is the ultimate truth of the Universe and its 8 key features enable the optimal evolution of humanity; and 3) The basic "Twin Soul" structure of

VGL will be there to answer questions about genetic testing in small animals and some wildlife species.

American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Convention

The VGL is thrilled to again participate in this year's [AQHA convention](#) to be held in Fort Worth, Texas, from February 24 to 27. We will be hosting a booth to help educate on genetic testing to promote health in the American Quarter Horses. We will be distributing up to date information on genetic tests for Quarter Horses and we will have fun interactive games on pigmentation.

109th UC Davis Picnic Day

One of the most anticipated events of the year, Picnic Day is the university's annual Open House for families, students, alumni, staff, faculty, and regional communities. Every year thousands of visitors enjoy the activities offered by UC Davis departments and student organizations. This year the event will take place on **Saturday, April 15**. Visit the [Picnic Day website](#) for more information and schedule of activities.

Take Our Children to Work Day

UC Davis' equivalent to a career day, [Take Our Children to Work Day](#) is a

humanity. Mr. Davis attended the PAG workshop so he could learn about the work being done to advance our understanding of horse biology.



Photo: VGL director, Dr. Rebecca Bellone, with Mr. Greg Davis after the equine workshop at PAG.

If you are interested in learning more about our research at the VGL please visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#) directly. If you are interested in supporting our research, visit our [advancement page](#) for more information.

UC Davis Goat Day



day when employees bring their children to campus to learn a bit about the work that we do. Several departments on campus participate every year and VGL is proud to be one of them! This year the event will take place on April 27.



This year [Goat Day](#) was held in person and virtually on January 28. VGL staff, **Rachel Ketchum** and **Dr. Liza Gershony**, shared information about the applications of genetic testing for goats and other species, and talked to young middle and high school students about possible career paths in Animal Sciences and Genetics.

US Lusitano Association Conference

Dr. Rebecca Bellone was invited to give a talk about genetic testing and its importance in horses at the first ever [US Lusitano Association Conference](#) that took place February 6-8 2023.



Photo: VGL director, Dr. Rebecca Bellone, with Sheri Prucka, president of the US Lusitano Association.

Support VGL Research



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