

Remembering his roots

(This article was originally published online in March 2026 by Iowa State University at vetmed.iastate.edu/story/remembering-his-roots, and was submitted with permission to republish.)

The [Iowa State University] College of Veterinary Medicine annually awards more than \$2 million in scholarships to incoming, current and graduating DVM students.

These awards are made possible through the generosity of alumni, donors and friends of the colleges.

One of those scholarships was created by Dr. David Helland (DVM '64). Originally from North Dakota, after graduation Helland served in the Army Veterinary Corps during the Vietnam War. His career took him to Kansas and Illinois, where for 40 years he owned and practiced at the Alpine Veterinary Hospital in Rockford, Ill.

But he never forgot his North Dakota roots. Nor did he forget Iowa State's College of Veterinary Medicine.

"I have always been grateful to Iowa State," Helland said. "The academic pathway was intense, but quality driven. While the cost of my undergraduate was significant, it was manageable. That's not the case now."

The David R. Helland, DVM '64 and Wealtha Helland Scholarship in Veterinary Medicine was established to honor Helland's North Dakota and Iowa State roots. Preference is given to North Dakota residents for the Helland scholarship.

"My post-graduate pathway took me away from North Dakota, but for today's new graduates, a DVM career in North Dakota may very well be available if they choose," Helland said.

Three current Iowa State veterinary students, Cady Fesenmaier, Grace Johnson and Madison Perry, were awarded the Helland scholarship this academic year. All are North Dakota residents.

"Without financial assistance like the Helland Scholarship I would more than likely not be able to attend veterinary school," said Johnson, who is from Harwood, N.D. "My future plans are to hopefully go back home to North Dakota and practice mixed animal medicine in the community that helped get me where I am today."

Financial assistance is also critical for Fesenmaier, who is from Horace, N.D.

"It greatly helps and impacts my education," she said. "Reducing tuition helps me focus more fully on my training and growing professionally rather than making decisions that are driven by financial pressure."

(Dr. David Helland, DVM, is a Jessie, N.D. native, having attended a one-room country school in Addie Township, Addie #3. He is a graduate of Binford High School, the Class of 1958.)



Dr. David Helland, DVM. (photo/submitted)

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everyone, she said that she also gets to focus on person-centered care throughout the day.

"Not everyone is social, so I get to sit in their room, reminisce, and learn from them," she said. "Our oldest resident is 102. She takes the mystery out of history when she shares with me because she lived it. I'm really bad at math, but I'm really good at being emotionally aware. I get to recognize and discern things that, once they're addressed, can change things for the better. I get to be a part of an intelligent team who partners in the care of all these precious souls we get to share 'home' with. I owe so much thanks and praise to my two Joyology Assistants, Molly Woodwick and Rikki Iverson! They're the Dream in our Team! I'm so grateful we are 'us' - together."

Ingstad said that her brain is trying to process how she is getting awarded just for loving people who are too easy to love.

"Imagine it," she said. "I get paid

to play, to be creative, to dance on a whim, to wear fun outfits and costumes, to sit with the dying and to pray with people! It's the residents who should get this award for blessing my days this much. I'm humbled, honored, and still in disbelief."

Lindsey explained that the Caregiver of the Year program is an annual event, and she said that anyone from any department can be nominated.

"When the time comes near, we post information about it so families, residents, and visitors know they have an opportunity to nominate someone," she said. "I really appreciate the individuals who made the nominations and hope to see more of it every year. Working in healthcare can often be a thankless job, but being nominated for an award like this can make it all worth it for our hard working employees!"

Ingstad said that it was family members of residents and residents themselves who wrote the most touching words about her on the nomination

forms.

"I know this because Nikki read them aloud that day," she said. "One of the most precious truths is that I was never chosen to be a mommy. For so many years, that has been such a heavy burden. But it dawned on me that I must have been chosen to work at Griggs County Care Center so that I can love on these people. But the biggest benefit and bonus to my position is that I get to meet and fall in love with all of their family members, too! I cry just thinking about how rich my life is because of all of them. My pseudo-family!"

In May, the North Dakota Long Term Care Association will hold its annual gala with the presentation of awards.

"They provide me with three tickets for guests," said Ingstad. "It says I won \$500 and a plaque. On top of that, they do a professional video highlighting my days as the chief Joyologist at Griggs County Care Center."

BINFORD FIRE Department
PANCAKE BREAKFAST
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 Serving 8am to 1pm at Fire Hall

Public Hearing Notice

Public Hearings on a proposed new public library building to obtain views and answer questions related to this project.

April 6th, 9:00 am
 Griggs County Courthouse, 805 Odegard Ave SW, Cooperstown

April 6th, 7:00 pm
 Cooperstown City Hall, 611 9th ST NE

April 9th, 6:00 pm
 Griggs County Public Library, 902 Burrel Ave SE, Cooperstown

Written comments are always welcome and may be submitted to the Griggs County Public Library.

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Mayville meet:

- Dalton Boll - 5th place in Humorous
- Victor Ludwig - 7th place in Storytelling
- Paul Johnson - 4th place in Humorous
- Matthew Brown - Top Novice in Inform
- Victor Ludwig and Matthew Brown - 8th in Serious Duo

"Congratulation to the GCC Speech Team members on their accomplishments at the last two speech meets," said Coach Amy Moser. "We have one regular season meet in Lisbon on March 28th before the Regional Meet on April 11 in McVile."

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