

A Brief History of Emory's Division of Animal Resources

The history of a School of Medicine organizational entity involved in the acquisition and care of research animals can be traced through financial records to 1966. Ten years later, this organization was formally organized under the leadership of the newly-hired University Veterinarian for the Robert W. Woodruff Health Sciences Center, Morton S. Silberman, DVM. Dr. Silberman's first budget was in the total amount of \$141,557 in 1976. During his tenure at Emory, Dr. Silberman served in a number of diverse leadership rolls within the WHSC, including those involving governmental and international affairs. As his responsibilities in these areas grew, Noel D. M. Lehner, DVM, MS, ACLAM was hired in 1986 to replace Dr. Silberman as the Director of the newly-created Division of Animal Resources (DAR) – a service and administrative unit with reporting lines in the School of Medicine. Dr. Lehner inherited a budget of \$839,569, a staff of approximately 25, and 41,255 gross square feet of animal research facilities divided between 15 sites. It was under the leadership of Dr. Lehner that the organization, staffing, programs, equipment standards, and facilities of the modern DAR were established. This was catalyzed under the Presidency of Dr. James T. Laney and the commitment of some of the 1979 Woodruff Foundation endowment to grow the research enterprise at Emory. The School of Medicine in 1987 ranked 48th in NIH extramural funding among institutions of medical education. During Dr. Lehner's term as Director, common enzootic murine pathogens of the day that were obstructing and confounding research were eradicated, the Emory main campus achieved AAALAC accreditation and virtually all animal care was centralized under the DAR. Over his 16 years as Director, Dr. Lehner not only closed 6 small and inefficient facilities, but also presided over the expansion of the facilities to 139,539 gross square feet (gsf) in 12 locations. Of this total, 93% had been built new or renovated and in part funded by \$4.8M in federal animal resources improvement grants. The DAR staff numbered 61 employees and the annual operating budget, excluding capital equipment and animal purchases, was \$3.8M. By 2002, the School of Medicine had risen to 21st place on the list of NIH-funded schools and colleges. Michael J. Huerkamp, DVM, DACLAM succeeded Dr. Lehner in 2002 as the Director of the DAR. In 2003, Dirck L. Dillehay, DVM, PhD, DACVP, DACLAM, became the first DAR veterinarian to be appointed full Professor of non-emeritus status at Emory University. As of the end of fiscal year 2007, the DAR stood as an organization of 71 employees with a budget just over \$5M supporting research with animals at 11 sites and encompassing 146,424 gsf.