The Future of Veterinary Medicine Makes Headlines
A RESPONSE FROM OUR EDITORIAL TEAM
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Did the Veterinary Community Respond?
The article created a stir both within and outside veterinary circles. Dr. Deborah Kochevar, Dean of Tufts University’s Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and President of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) responded to the article with an open letter to the veterinary medical community, acknowledging some of the issues raised but also countering other conclusions, citing data from an AAVMC survey of recent graduates.

Was The New York Times Article Right?
It’s not our job to determine that answer. As with many commentaries written by those with a limited understanding of an industry, the article based many of its conclusions on inaccurate or skewed perspectives. In fact, several inaccuracies were corrected in a later issue of the newspaper. However, the article does identify several, very real challenges that exist in our vital branch of health care. The article, Dr. Kochevar’s response, and ensuing dialogue in many circles effectively raises awareness of several issues that are front and center to veterinarians across this industry.

What Challenges Will Define Our Future?
Today’s challenges and issues will have a long-lasting effect on the industry, including:
- Is truly objective data available about the economic climate of veterinary medicine?
- For today’s veterinary students, are the costs of veterinary education out of control?

It was the 1950 movie Born Yesterday that made famous the quote, “Never do nothing you wouldn't want printed on the front page of The New York Times.” While it wasn’t the front page, veterinary medicine found itself in the Business Section of that very publication just a few short weeks ago.

On February 23, David Segal’s article, High Debt and Falling Demand Trap New Vets, brought public attention to some of the challenges facing veterinarians and the industry as a whole. In short, the article:
- Outlined the trials and tribulations of a “typical” new graduate during her first year of clinical practice
- Cited industry “experts” and quoted employment and industry data about falling demand for veterinary care
- Painted a gloomy picture for the future of veterinary medicine and those choosing to pursue it as a career.
Can My Voice Be Heard?
The Today's Veterinary Practice team would like to explore these questions and, therefore, we are planning to bring together individuals from all walks of veterinary medicine—private practice, academia, industry, government, practice development/finance—for our first Challenges & Opportunities in Veterinary Medicine roundtable. We want you, the reader and today's practitioner, to have a voice in this session: Please send your comments and questions to tmeredith@todaysveterinarypractice.com or editorinchief@todaysveterinarypractice.com, which will allow our roundtable participants to address the issues most important to you.

We look forward to bringing you a comprehensive overview of this roundtable event in a future issue of Today's Veterinary Practice!