

Theme Music ([00:01](#)):

Please listen carefully.

Taylor Pardue ([00:01](#)):

Welcome to the NC State Philanthropy Podcast, telling the world how we Think and Do through the support of our friends, alumni and more. I'm your host, Taylor Pardue.

([00:18](#)):

On this episode, we're joined by Hyemi Sevening, assistant dean of philanthropy for the College of Veterinary Medicine, to learn how donors can be part of its truly life-changing work.

([00:31](#)):

Thanks so much for joining us today, Hyemi. To kick things off, just tell listeners a little bit about yourself and what first brought you to NC State.

Hyemi Sevening ([00:51](#)):

Thank you. Thank you for having me today. Just to share a little bit of my background on it, I've been in the development side for 20-plus years on that. Having worked for ... I was just thinking about this. So, this is my sixth academic institution that I've worked with and worked for. But I think, really, the reason why I came here was to support the efforts and the work at the College of Veterinary Medicine. It really is one of the top-tier colleges of veterinary medicine in the U.S., and the opportunity to be able to contribute and work with the team that we have here was something that I really couldn't pass up.

Taylor Pardue ([01:26](#)):

Well, talk about your current role. How did you come into it, and what all does it involve?

Hyemi Sevening ([01:31](#)):

I currently oversee the team for the philanthropic arm of the college on that. So, it's essentially all of the fundraisers for the college on it. I came to this, really, by virtue of the fact that I've had wonderful people that I've worked with and worked for at my past institutions. And there was an opportunity where a previous dean that I worked for knew the current dean here, Dean Meurs, and they were able to make that connection. And she reached out to me about it. Our work is, really, in terms of being able to work with our donors and our prospects to bring us as much philanthropic dollars to the college, really, across the board.

Taylor Pardue ([02:10](#)):

Well, the college is so interesting. All of our colleges, obviously, do amazing work, and they impact lives all around the world, but CVM is so unique because it's also a lot of animal lives that are impacted, obviously.

Hyemi Sevening ([02:23](#)):

Absolutely.

Taylor Pardue ([02:23](#)):

And a lot of the clients that come in through veterinary hospitals. So, talk a little bit about the different ways there are to give to CVM.

Hyemi Sevening ([02:33](#)):

I will say that it is probably, veterinary colleges and veterinary schools have probably one of the broadest opportunities in terms of support on it. So, when I talk with a donor, I would say, "We will find a place for you matching your passions," because whether it's supporting our students, our faculty, the research, innovation, our hospitals, our patients. Even in terms of the work that we do that impacts One Health and Environmental Sciences as well, there is a place for anyone.

Taylor Pardue ([03:05](#)):

How do you go about ... Yeah, it feels like sky's the limit with the different possibilities for giving. How do you go about identifying ... Is it just necessarily through connections they've already had with CVM, or how do you really identify that with a donor?

Hyemi Sevening ([03:19](#)):

It really is about listening to the donor, and many times they may come in wanting to support a specific area because that was the immediate experience that they had, but as we get to know them a bit more, that's where the opportunities, I think, really blossom in regard to where they might support and provide that impact. What I would always say is, it is really about listening to what the passions are of the donor.

Taylor Pardue ([03:45](#)):

What is the average donor to the college like? Is that donor more of a[n] alum necessarily, or is it someone from the public? Or how do they get involved with our college?

Hyemi Sevening ([03:56](#)):

I would say, right now, if you looked at the makeup of our donors, [the] majority are going to be what we call through our Grateful Clients. That would mean that they have had some experience with us through bringing their pet, whether it's their beloved dog or their cat or their horse or even their farm animal, to us, and they've had that positive experience with us, and they want to find a way to thank us.

Taylor Pardue ([04:23](#)):

Well, I've done a lot of work with our Office of Gift Planning over the years, and I know a lot of gifts that have come in through people's estates, or that are documented and will come in through people's estates, have been [from] people who have been impacted so much by the college, whether it's through the work of the students directly or if it's through as clients. But yeah, you made a great point. It's not necessarily just your household pets. I mean, veterinary care impacts, I know it's even the NC Zoo in Asheboro. So many animals are impacted by the care that we provide here.

Hyemi Sevening ([04:54](#)):

Absolutely. And it goes even beyond that. Food security, right? Because I don't think people realize how incredibly important ... I mean, the diversity of roles that veterinarians play in society. So, it's not just your average, they're going to go and take care of your dog and cat in this clinical setting. They are part of the teams that go out and ensure that the beef that we eat is safe on that. The chickens, the eggs and the chickens that we consume are also safe as well. So, it is very, very broad.

Taylor Pardue ([05:26](#)):

That's a great point. Yeah. What are some examples of success stories? Some of the ways that you've seen philanthropy impact these areas across the college so far?

Hyemi Sevening (05:35):

And I will couch this in having only been here since March of 2025. Having gotten to know some of our donors now, I think one of the ones that I see on a daily basis is the impact on to our students on that. We have incredible donors that have been so generous in terms of supporting our students, whether it's through the scholarships that they provide or even other means of support for their internships or their externships. So, that, I think for me, is incredible.

(06:05):

And when you think about that part of it, too, is that it's not just that immediate impact that's happening, because now this carries with that student that graduates and hopefully they remember and they're able to give back afterwards as well. Another example would be the clinical work that we do, taking care of and helping our animal patients. The support that we get, not only in terms of being able to push the envelope a little bit, the opportunity of thinking about there may be a new technique or a new way of diagnosing or treating a patient on that. We've, I think, benefited quite a bit in support that's come through for research and clinical programmatic support to allow us to be able to kind of do those things as well.

Taylor Pardue (06:52):

Sounds great. I had the opportunity, I guess it's been a couple years ago now, to really tour CVM and see behind the scenes and get to see all those different elements, like you were saying — the research, the actual treatment areas and things like that. I would say CVM is probably the most visited college by the public; more than some of the other colleges, that there's just that extra outreach aspect where people really get to come to campus as clients to bring their animals and everything for our care. What if a listener has not ever got to come to campus and really see behind the scenes? What all does CVM kind of bring to bear as far as our facilities and just the different components that go into all of this?

Hyemi Sevening (07:35):

Right. And kind of giving a little bit of context and background: Our hospital, so, we have the small animal and the large animal hospital. It services approximately, I think we're looking at about 35,000 cases on an annual basis right now. And that would translate probably to about 30,000 patients on an annual basis. And most of them are coming from this region externally. A lot of times, that's the only area that they see, because when they're coming to us, they're coming at a very vulnerable time ...

Taylor Pardue (08:02):

Sure.

Hyemi Sevening (08:04):

... on it. And so, their focus is going to be on their pet and their animal. But our campus, it's over a hundred-acre campus that we occupy at NC State. And it has, when we think about it, it's got your traditional, the classroom settings, the auditoriums for the curriculum, but we also have amazing research facilities as well as a working farm. So, I think there's just a lot that people can see. And, really, I think that gives them an understanding of the breadth of the work that we do.

Taylor Pardue ([08:33](#)):

I think the location maybe is also an important aspect of where CVM is located in regards to Centennial and Main Campus and everything. Anyone who has been to the state fair every year or goes to Carter-Finley or the Lenovo Center, you probably, I mean, the Belltower, aspects like that are very visible to the public, but everybody probably remembers the cows as they drive by. That is part of CVM. You were talking about the working-farm aspect.

Hyemi Sevensing ([08:58](#)):

Yes, absolutely.

Taylor Pardue ([08:58](#)):

Just a very visible reminder of the work that we do at CVM and how it impacts people all across the state, all across the country and beyond, really.

Hyemi Sevensing ([09:07](#)):

Yeah. It is a working dairy and they sell the milk. So, yeah, absolutely.

Taylor Pardue ([09:14](#)):

So, tied in with aspects of Howling Cow ice cream, if anyone's familiar with that, listeners are. You actually have a new facility, or a new component of the facilities, that is underway. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Hyemi Sevensing ([09:25](#)):

Sure, sure. It is the Large Animal Veterinary Center. So, it will be a renovation and expansion of the current large animal hospital that we have on it. And when completed, it will be more than double the current footprint. So, it really allows us to increase [the] number of patients that we can actually have coming through the hospital. When we look at the space that we need to be able to teach the next generation of large animal veterinarians, as well and clinical staff, it really solidifies the excellence, and what I would say, the clinical expertise that we actually have in our faculty, and now we'll have the facilities to kind of match that as well.

Taylor Pardue ([10:04](#)):

Are there any giving opportunities tied with that maybe listeners can be part of?

Hyemi Sevensing ([10:08](#)):

Absolutely. Absolutely. We've been very fortunate in the fact that this project, it's a \$120 million project that we have underway on that. The state of North Carolina has provided a \$70 million, I guess, budget approval for this. So, we have \$50 million that we will need to raise for this project to be completed. So, there are wonderful naming opportunities within the facilities if anyone is interested in providing the support for it.

Taylor Pardue ([10:34](#)):

Sounds great.

Hyemi Sevensing ([10:35](#)):

Yeah.

Taylor Pardue ([10:35](#)):

We will include links to that in the show notes, but that is an exciting, specific area that listeners can become part of. I feel like CVM is such a good example of gifts of all sizes can make a difference, because it can be something as big as a facility like that, but there are so many aspects of, like you said, internships, externships, all these different learning opportunities that we do so well here. Talk about the importance of gifts of all sizes.

Hyemi Sevensing ([11:02](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. And it truly is gifts of all sizes, because when you aggregate all of that together, it makes a huge impact. Whether it is through giving, through that annual giving program, gifts through that process or through that mode of support really provide the college the ability to address some of the needs that it has immediately, but also, it has the ability to support all of the areas throughout the college. But when we think about even just our pet assistance funds, right? So, it's \$1,500, \$1,000 makes a huge difference to someone who's bringing their pet in that may not be able to afford all of the care costs on that. That \$1,000 granted to them, it makes that difference for them in terms of being able to save their pet and having that pet rejoin the family again.

Taylor Pardue ([11:52](#)):

I'm so glad that you said that, and said it that way as well. The aspects of donating, it's not just on the university side. It's not just benefiting the students and the research, the professors and things like that. It really does benefit the clients directly, too, and they're animals, because you're helping on both sides of that experience.

Hyemi Sevensing ([12:13](#)):

Absolutely. And I think, I mean, that's the wonderful thing about veterinary medicine. It is not a one-sided journey, and I think that's one of the reasons why I love being in this space; because you are helping across the board, and the impact is across the board as well.

Taylor Pardue ([12:30](#)):

Yeah. I always try to really mention with these podcasts and stories that I write and things like that with the university, just that real-world impact that donors really can see tangibly, immediately, long term, and CVM is just a great representation of that in all aspects.

Hyemi Sevensing ([12:48](#)):

Absolutely.

Taylor Pardue ([12:49](#)):

Well, this episode, we're recording it a few weeks ahead of Day of Giving for 2026. If listeners don't already know, that is our annual, big fundraising day, kind of all hands on deck, and donors really push funds all across the university to greater heights and everything. And that's a great reminder for CVM, especially. There are so many ways you can get involved. So, if listeners haven't already planned their day of giving out, I hope you will get involved with CVM especially.

Hyemi Sevensing ([13:15](#)):

Absolutely. We are already planning in terms of what we're thinking about for Day of Giving. One of the things that we've talked about, and certainly the dean I think is 100% behind this, is making sure that we provide opportunities across the board. So, it is about the student, it is about the patient, it is about the client, it is about the research, the teaching, the clinical mission. So, there's lots of opportunities.

Taylor Pardue ([13:39](#)):

So, another unique point I feel like about CVM is the fact that where a lot of colleges have undergraduates and graduate students, you mentioned a while ago, students graduating and carrying on that knowledge that they go out into their careers with. Talk about CVM, how graduate students are obviously, maybe the most important part of the college because of the way that it's structured and the way that people come in to train to be veterinarians.

Hyemi Sevensing ([14:04](#)):

Absolutely. Yes, because it is considered what we call a graduate or professional school, depending upon where we are on that part of it. Our students would have already received a degree, undergraduate degree, and so they come into this, and it's a four-year program, very similar to what I would say to the human medicine side in terms of medical schools. And so, we also have master's and Ph.D. students that are part of the college because many of them are studying and doing research under some of, really, the world's renowned experts on that part of it. So, it is a critical component for us in terms of our graduate students.

Taylor Pardue ([14:41](#)):

How have the classes grown over the last little bit? I know there is a shortage of veterinarians right now, and CVM is really ramping up to provide even more.

Hyemi Sevensing ([14:50](#)):

Yes. And I think that is definitely in terms of, I mean, if you talk to anyone that's looking at the trend for the veterinary profession, they know and they recognize that there is a shortage and there will continue to be a shortage on it. So, many of the vet schools like the CVM here are trying to address that part of it. And the opportunity for us to increase the number of students that we are able to admit on an annual basis is one of those ways that we can do it. And so, we went from 100 to 125 students per class on that part of it. We'll be able to, by the time that it's fully rolling, it'll be an additional hundred students that we have enrolled in four years. And I want to clarify, it's 25 per class.

([15:29](#)):

One of the things that we talk about in terms of the graduate level or the professional, we have the four-year program where our students obtain a DVM. We have our master's, we have our Ph.D.s, but there's a whole nother subset that it is essentially like human medicine. We have a residency program on that, our house officers, and we have one of the largest ones in pretty much all of the specialty areas of veterinary medicine. So, we're close to 30 different specialties, and it is really related to, and when you think about human medicine, we have cardiology, we have internal medicine, we now have nephrology and neurology as well, but we also have behavior medicine and even shelter medicine, right? That's one of the specialty areas.

([16:13](#)):

So, I think it is incredible in terms of the diversity, again, the breadth of what our students will undertake on that part of it, but certainly in terms of the breadth of what expertise that we bring to veterinary medicine. And I think a lot of people don't realize or sometimes forget that we are the only vet school in the state of North Carolina on that. So, it is an incredible resource that we have here that is really right in our backyard on that.

Taylor Pardue ([16:40](#)):

Yeah, that's a great point. I mean, to be great at something is one thing, but to be the one and only source of it in North Carolina, that is a huge responsibility, but also opportunity, and just, I'm glad we have that here on campus.

Hyemi Sevensing ([16:53](#)):

Absolutely. We are very well supported by the university as well, and certainly by our community. What I will say, too, and I hear this quite a bit in terms of talking with our faculty members as well as other people in the veterinary profession and the veterinary animal health world, it's very, very hard to actually retain and recruit sometimes faculty members because we're competing with industry. We're competing with the private practices on that, where they could go and make a lot more money doing what they love doing out in private practice or with industry. For us to be able to really think about, how do we recruit and retain our faculty that need to be here to train that next generation. So, being able to look for and have opportunities to be able to recognize outstanding faculty through endowed professorships, named professorships, because that really, I think, gives them not only in terms of the recognition with the title that they have with an endowed professorship, but the funding that comes with it that allows them to pursue, whether it's the research area that they're really wanting to do or even some of the teaching aspects of it.

Taylor Pardue ([18:03](#)):

I'm so glad you said that about endowed professorships, because that's been a point that's been near and dear to my heart lately with projects that I've been working on is how, regardless of economic conditions, those endowed professorships, or endowed scholarships — endowments give us that sustained funding. The work we do here is invaluable, and it impacts so many different people and animals and just aspects of our world. Endowments allow us to continue doing that work regardless of conditions and just how needful that is right now.

Hyemi Sevensing ([18:34](#)):

Absolutely on that, and it is something that is critically important. And we talk about that with a lot of our donors as well. It allows for us to really plan, but also in terms of when we do think about, especially around faculty, that endowment means that it's there forever. And so, we're not having to have them worry about where's next year's salary going to come from. Or if they're thinking about doing a research project that may be long term on that, they have the ability to be able to utilize those funds to be able to do it.

Taylor Pardue ([19:05](#)):

Well, if listeners don't know already, I know from several stories that I've done with various professors across the university, a lot of times, the professorships get used to benefit the students directly, too.

Hyemi Sevensing ([19:15](#)):

As well.

Taylor Pardue ([19:16](#)):

And it's just a wonderful all-ships-rising-together kind of thing. So, it's impacting the students again as well.

Hyemi Sevensing ([19:23](#)):

Absolutely. And what I would say, too, is, in order for us to really think about how we recruit or have our students think about going into teaching or really thinking about staying with an academic institution, if they're not given the opportunity to get hands-on experience, they're not going to think about that. When our faculty are able to bring them onto a research project or bring them on, whether it's providing a project over the summer or having them work in the lab throughout the semester or the year, that opens that door for that student to think about, not just thinking about solo practice or private practice, but really thinking about what other opportunities they have.

Taylor Pardue ([20:02](#)):

I'm glad you said that. It's a great point of all the different opportunities that an NC State education opens up like that. I feel like that's a common theme is, a lot of people when they come into college, they just don't know of all the different opportunities that are out there. They think there's this job and this job and maybe this and that, but all the different ways that you can apply an education from here, especially a veterinary education.

Hyemi Sevensing ([20:24](#)):

Oh, absolutely. Yeah. One of the things why, and I go back to having now worked now, this is my third vet school that I've worked with in terms of the development side, but I think it's also because I recognize, and I'm not a veterinarian, but I see it, right? Recognize in terms of the versatility of that vet degree on that, because you can go into anything, whether it's business, whether it's clinical practice, whether it's teaching, anything on that part of it, and public service as well. So, it's incredible, and we need those veterinarians in all of those areas.

Taylor Pardue ([20:58](#)):

One last thing I would like to mention about our distinguished professors. I love CVM's Coats of Excellence program, and I feel like that's a way, you were talking about recognizing them for their work and having that named professorship. This is another way that donors can really impact and show their love and respect for these professors who also have helped them as clients with their patients and things like that. Talk a little bit about that program and what all is involved with it.

Hyemi Sevensing ([21:22](#)):

Sure. And what I will say, too, is, because it's not only recognizing the individual faculty or the clinician on that, it benefits the service and the hospital that they're a part of as well. And that I think is probably one of the most meaningful ways that I've seen clients experience being able to provide some sort of that thank you back to the faculty or the clinician, but it is. Our faculty and staff do this out of love, and they want to be there in terms of taking care of the animals on that, and they're not there wanting that pat all the time or that public recognition. And so, when someone decides to do that, it truly, truly is meaningful for that faculty member on that part of it.

[\(22:05\)](#):

I've been lucky enough to experience, I think, three Coats of Excellences since my time here, and every one of those is unique because it is that personal connection that the client has had to that individual faculty and a member or the clinician. I think for our faculty it is something that they wear with pride as well because, as part of the ceremony, they receive either a lab coat that has a personal inscription or customized inscription on it or another piece of clothing. You see them wearing this throughout the hospital. It is, I think, a very personal and meaningful way of a client recognizing the work that our clinical staff and faculty do.

Taylor Pardue [\(22:47\)](#):

Well, it goes back to what I was saying about how visible, how publicly facing so much of what CVM does. I think it's just another great point of that where, I know if I was a client coming in, like I said, it's a literal coat. It's a literal, visible way of people being able to see, this is not just a talented professional; this is a caring professional who made connections with other clients, other patients, and they felt so strongly and wanted to show their appreciation. So, to me, that's just a great — I like to call donations and gifts to the university votes of confidence. To me, that is just a very, very public-facing vote of confidence that would make me feel a lot better going into a, like you said, a tough situation usually when they come to a veterinary hospital and just in that clinical work. So, I'm glad we do that.

Hyemi Sevensing [\(23:34\)](#):

Yeah. I give it to whoever had that idea on that part because it was here well before I got here on that.

Taylor Pardue [\(23:40\)](#):

Well, there's just so many things like that. As I said, I got to tour CVM. It was just a really eye-opening experience. There were all these visible reminders of, people have donated artwork in memory of their pets, they've delivered Coats of Excellence, things like that. Just so many ways that people show their appreciation for the college, and just, philanthropy is such a wonderful part of that.

Hyemi Sevensing [\(23:59\)](#):

It really is, and I think one of the things we can kind of go back a little bit in terms of the student impact, too, because nowhere else would you have their pets being part of the named scholarship on that part of it, too. And so, it is that reminder that they are part of the family, right? Their pets are part of the family, and it's a way to make sure that their memory lives on and it really is making an impact in terms of supporting the next generation.

Taylor Pardue [\(24:24\)](#):

So much of what we do here on campus could truly be called life-changing, but CVM, just, the truly life-changing work. So, appreciate all of your involvement on the fundraising side, and just everyone who makes all of this possible. Thank you so much for coming out today as well and just taking time to share more opportunities like this for donors and just telling these stories of the impact that the college has on the world.

Hyemi Sevensing [\(24:47\)](#):

Thank you. No, it's been a pleasure.

Taylor Pardue [\(24:53\)](#):

To learn more about how you can support the College of Veterinary Medicine, please visit [cvm.ncsu.edu](http://cvm.ncsu.edu).

[\(24:57\)](#):

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[\(25:15\)](#):

Thanks for listening, and as always, go Pack.