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Built on the Shoulders of Veterinary Giants: St. Joseph Veterinary College (SJVC)

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From 1875 through 1924 Missouri was home to five private veterinary colleges. Of the 41 institutions offering veterinary education in the US, three were in Kansas City, one in St. Louis and the other in St. Joseph. Missouri and New York had more private colleges than any other state.

Evolving from a fur trading post, St. Joseph was founded in the mid 1800s by Joseph Robidoux, whose name remains prominent to this day. St. Joseph, like Kansas City, occupied a favorable location on the Missouri River. Both are historically significant in the development of veterinary medicine, animal health products, livestock centers and today's veterinary corridor, producing nearly one-third of the world's animal health business.

The St. Joseph Veterinary College (SJVC) was established in 1905. Thirteen students graduated three years later with a Doctor of Veterinary Science degree. Later, a four year program was established with a DVM degree. The first location of the college was on the south side of the city. As it grew it required expanded facilities and a larger faculty. The college moved to 7th and Sylvania Streets and later to 9th and Mary Streets.

Drs. Sesco Stewart and R.C. Moore each served as president of the Kansas City Veterinary College (KCVC), and then later of the SJVC. Dr. Stewart was the first president of the AVMA from the Kansas City area in 1902.

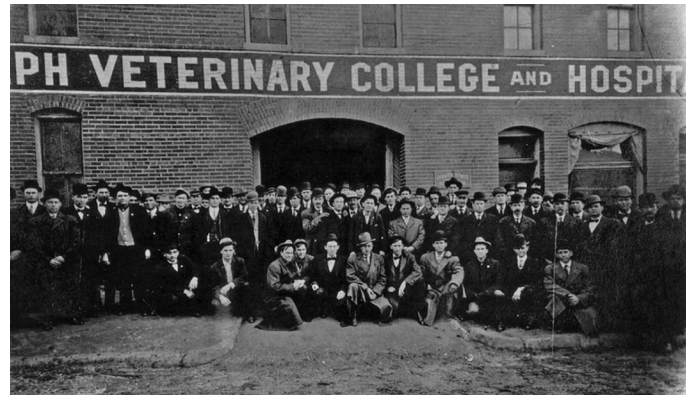
As the college grew and moved to new locations more classrooms, dissection rooms and laboratories were built. A large recreation hall housed a basketball court and a location for social gatherings. A ladies auxiliary was formed and planned dances and picnics in nearby Krug Park.

The faculty grew to 21 members by 1914 and included physicians and a lawyer. Subjects included anatomy, chemistry, histology, language of medicine, parasitology, pathology and physiology.

Administration and faculty members contributed to the success and excellent education of students, including Dr. Joseph Weinman, who later taught at KCVC and MU. His son, Dr. Donald Weinman, taught microanatomy at KSU CVM. Dr. Hans Jensen, a founder of JenSal Laboratories in Kansas City, was also on the SJVC faculty. A star graduate was Dr. Clarence McElroy (1919), the first dean at Oklahoma State (1948 – 1953).

During WWI, there was a large need for veterinarians. Students of draft age were required to sign an agreement to serve within 24 hours of call during the war and following graduation. They served where horses and mules were used by the US and other free world allies and as food inspectors.

Following the war, private veterinary colleges closed and public institutions were established to conduct veterinary education. After graduating 421 students the SJVC closed in 1924 following 19 years of service. All records were transferred to KSU.



St. Joseph Veterinary College