



A mentor's passion can be contagious

By the age of eight, Patricia Conrad had decided to become a veterinarian. Years later, she entered a Ph.D. program at the University of Edinburgh, where she heard Professor Duncan Brown deliver an impassioned lecture about a parasite that was killing cattle in Africa.

"His passion to develop a vaccine that would stop this devastating disease is why I became involved in research," says Dr. Conrad, who is now a professor at the University of California–Davis. "His enthusiasm for training young scientists, not just in scientific methods but in the ethics and values and importance of science, also inspired me to mentor others."

Dr. Conrad has taken those lessons and, along with her colleagues, including Dr. Jonna Mazet, former chair of MAF's Wildlife Scientific Advisory Board, has created a learning environment at the university that combines excellent mentoring with good research. Their research is improving the lives of threatened California sea otters, and much of this work has been made possible through Foundation funding.

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