

## **Pratt Funds Overview**

### **ACADEMIC, RESEARCH, AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND FINANCE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**September 7, 2020**

In 1975, the university received a significant bequest from the estate of Mr. John Lee Pratt of Stafford County, following his death on December 20, 1975. The bequest was divided equally into two distinct parts, one to support Animal Nutrition and one to support the College of Engineering. According to the will, the bequest for Animal Nutrition was to be used to promote the study of animal nutrition by supplementing salaries, providing equipment and materials to be used for experiments in feeding and in the preparation of feeds for livestock and poultry, and publishing and disseminating the research results of the studies. The will provided that the bequest for the College of Engineering should be used to support research and scholarships.

Distributions of the Pratt Estate were received in several installments: \$9,561,819 in 1975, \$1,330,000 in 1977, \$47,000 in 1979, and \$30,164 in 1981, for a total of \$10,968,983. Over the years, the Pratt Endowment investment pool has grown to \$41.16 million, as of June 30, 2020. The following paragraphs summarize some of the major accomplishments of the College of Engineering and the Animal Nutrition Programs that are directly tied to the funding provided by the Pratt Estate.

When the Pratt Endowment was originally established, the College of Engineering was in the early stages of becoming established as a nationally recognized leader in engineering education. The Pratt Endowment has played a significant role over the years in allowing the college to enrich its pool of students and to offer additional international study opportunities to students and faculty.

The expenditure of income funds from the Pratt Endowment provides an unusual opportunity to support an animal nutrition program of high quality. Use of these endowment earnings has concentrated on enhancing research and educational opportunities beyond what departments could do with state and federal funding. The main funding strategy remains with strong support for Ph.D. training, direct research support, scientific equipment, and visiting professors that stimulate and inspire the faculty and students engaged in nutrition research.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the 2019-20 Pratt Funds Activity Statements for Animal Nutrition and the College of Engineering be approved.

November 16, 2020

**PRATT FUNDS ACTIVITY STATEMENT**  
**For the Year Ended June 30, 2020**  
**ENGINEERING**

**Income**

Balance, July 1, 2019	\$ 68,403	
Endowment Income for 2019-20	<u>999,333</u>	
 Total Available		 \$1,067,736

**Expenditures\***

Undergraduate Scholarships	\$492,465	
Graduate Research Fellowships	168,030	
Graduate Research Scholarships	122,101	
Graduate Recruitment for Research Programs	100,343	
Undergraduate International Scholarships	31,749	
Graduate Research Tuition Scholarships	13,841	
Graduate International Scholarships	<u>11,500</u>	
 Total Expenditures		 <u>\$940,029</u>
 Balance at June 30, 2020 to be carried to 2020-21		 <b><u>\$ 127,707</u></b>

*\*See Attachment A for Engineering programs supported by Pratt Funds.*

**PRATT FUNDS ACTIVITY STATEMENT**  
**For the Year Ended June 30, 2020**  
**ANIMAL NUTRITION**

**Income**

Balance, July 1, 2019	\$ 311,056	
Endowment Income for 2019-20	<u>969,834</u>	
 Total Available		 \$1,280,890

**Expenditures\***

Graduate Student Scholars	\$ 544,913	
Scientific Equipment and Supplies	267,105	
Undergraduate Students	164,747	
Nutrition Technicians	146,438	
Visiting Scientists	32,836	
Research Publications	<u>993</u>	
 Total Expenditures		 <u>\$1,157,032</u>
 Balance at June 30, 2020 to be carried to 2020-21		 <b><u>\$ 123,858</u></b>

*\*See Attachment B for Animal Nutrition Programs supported by Pratt Funds.*

**PRATT FUNDS: College of Engineering**

The Pratt Endowment enriches the College of Engineering in many ways, adding to Virginia Tech's reputation. In fiscal year 2019-2020, Pratt Funds supported the following engineering programs: undergraduate scholarships, undergraduate and graduate international scholarships, graduate research assistantships, graduate fellowships and graduate tuition scholarships, and graduate recruitment for the college's research programs.

**Undergraduate Scholarships****Spent: \$492,465**

Pratt Funds allow the college to offer Dean's Scholar scholarships to entering freshmen. These scholarships provide a four-year, \$1,500 to \$5,000 per academic year continuing commitment to each recipient, provided at least a 3.5 grade point average is maintained. In fiscal year 2019-20, Pratt Funds provided \$1,500 to \$5,000 to 180 students.

**Undergraduate International Scholarships****Spent: \$31,749**

Pratt Funds provided scholarships to 27 undergraduate students participating in international experiences during the 2019-20 academic year. Travel scholarships were provided to students to travel to countries in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America. Examples of activities include participation in senior design projects, service learning experiences, cultural exchange programs, and study abroad programs in various countries. Over 50 scholarships were canceled due to travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples of these activities include participation in the Rising Sophomore Program, Civil Engineering's Bridges Program, and various cultural exchange and study abroad programs. The unspent funding will be carried forward and likely used to pay down program deficits incurred by departments that granted full scholarship refunds to students but were unable to recover the costs.

**Graduate International Scholarships****Spent: \$11,500**

Pratt Funds supported nine graduate students undertaking a variety of international experiences in Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America. Examples of the international experiences include participation in conferences, research, service learning, and study abroad programs. Travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted international research and conference plans for about 10 graduate students. The unspent funding will be carried forward and likely used to pay down program deficits incurred by departments that granted full scholarship refunds to students but were unable to recover the costs.

**Graduate Research Scholarships****Spent: \$122,101**

The college used Pratt funding to support graduate research assistants in the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science's (ICTAS) Doctoral Scholars Program. This program is a multi-disciplinary research effort coordinated by ICTAS, with significant contributions from participating departments, colleges, and the Graduate School. Students receive a graduate research scholarship of \$32,000 per year for a maximum of four years. The program supported 10 students in fiscal year 2019-20.

**Graduate Fellowships and Graduate Tuition Scholarships**

**Spent: \$181,871**

**Graduate Research Fellowships**

Each engineering department receives a portion of Pratt Funds to use for graduate fellowships. In fiscal year 2019-20, 92 students received Pratt Fellowships ranging from \$55/month to \$1,126/month. These fellowships supplement existing assistantships, allowing the college to offer competitive compensation packages to graduate students being recruited by other top engineering colleges.

*Spent: \$168,030*

**Graduate Research Tuition Scholarships**

Engineering departments have the option of using Pratt Fellowship funding for tuition remission scholarships for graduate students. In fiscal year 2019-20, departments provided partial or complete tuition for seven graduate students from Pratt Funds.

*Spent: \$13,841*

**Graduate Recruitment for Research Programs**

**Spent: \$100,343**

The college's departments readily acknowledge that the use of Pratt Funds to support visiting prospective graduate students substantially increases our enrollment of top-quality graduate students and is critical to the college's research programs. In fiscal year 2019-20, this funding supported the travel expenditures for over 125 prospective graduate students. A majority of the graduate recruiting visits occurred prior to the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions.

## PRATT FUNDS: Animal Nutrition

The John Lee Pratt Endowment has been instrumental in enhancing the quality of the university's animal nutrition programs at Virginia Tech. The Pratt Endowment objective as specified in John Lee Pratt's bequest is to "*promote the study of animal nutrition, provide equipment and materials for feeding experiments and the preparation of livestock and poultry feeds, and to publish and disseminate the practical results from this research.*" In an effort to better meet the original goals of the Endowment in enhancing Animal Nutrition programs and attract high quality graduate scholars, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Pratt Endowment Executive Council modified the process of awarding the Pratt Funds in 2011. The process seeks proposals that enhance faculty programs in Animal Nutrition by aiding in the establishment of new interdisciplinary and externally-funded research, augmenting established funded research, or bridging gaps in projects between periods of extramural funding. Graduate student and visiting scholar support is a major component of these projects. In 2020, the college funded 23 active projects. The programs of 24 faculty members located in eight different departments are supported through these 23 projects. A total of 11 graduate students are funded by these projects.

Direct support of stipends and operations and enhancement of graduate programs through equipment purchases and visiting scientists are the primary expenditures. The total net expenditure for fiscal year 2020 was \$1,157,031 for the continuing program. The main categories of expenditures were as follows:

Graduate Student Scholars (Ph.D. & M.S.)	47.1%
Nutrition Program Support Personnel	12.7%
Undergraduate Program Scholarships & Research	14.2%
Scientific Equipment and Supplies	23.2%
Visiting Scholars and Seminars	2.8%

### **Graduate Student Scholars**

The Pratt program has now matured and currently 11 scholars are enrolled in the program. These students are from several states and countries and are selected based on excellence in their academic and research accomplishments. They receive a Ph.D. or M.S. stipend plus payment of all required tuition and fees. Additionally, each M.S. or Ph.D. candidate receives \$2,500, to be used for operational expenses of their research programs.

### **Nutritional Program Support Personnel**

Research technicians in the field of animal nutrition are a key component of Pratt funding. The Pratt Funds provide partial support of three technicians in animal and dairy

sciences. These technicians are essential in assisting with the necessary sample preparation and data collection for research performed by the scientists engaged in animal nutrition projects in proteomics, ruminant nutrition, and nutrient management.

### **Undergraduate Program Scholarships and Research**

Over 50 outstanding freshmen students were awarded \$1,000 merit scholarships, each, upon entering departments which offer programs in animal nutrition. In addition, 10 Pratt Senior Animal Nutrition Research Scholars received scholarships (\$1,500 each) and research support (\$1,000 each). This exciting program allows outstanding seniors to participate in undergraduate research programs working directly with a faculty researcher. They report their research results at a symposium each spring. Many of these students pursue graduate programs in animal nutrition.

### **Scientific Equipment and Supplies**

Expenditures for equipment and research space renovations continued to emphasize the needs of programs focusing on animal nutrition at various units at the university. The small equipment (<\$10,000) needs were implemented based on the desire of the faculty to achieve the goals of the proposed projects. A request for proposals for large equipment was issued in fiscal year 2020, but some of this equipment was not received until the start of fiscal year 2021 because of delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Visiting Scholars and Seminars**

An important stimulus for research programs in animal nutrition is the presence of visiting scientists in seminars, in the classroom, and in the laboratory. A nutrition seminar is regularly supported by Pratt to bring in outstanding speakers from other institutions and industry. Other scientists visit for periods of time ranging from a few days to several months. Visitors supported by Pratt present seminars for the university community and interact with animal nutrition faculty and students in formal and informal instructional settings including laboratories. Visiting scientists/scholars expenditures are higher than the amounts used in recent years due to the new process of funding proposals as some of these proposals include visiting scientists as a part of their research plan.

### **Research Publications**

The program still allows for paying the publication costs of research journal articles resulting from student dissertations. Very few faculty members, however, request the payment of their publication costs from Pratt Funds, mainly because either they include the publication costs in their external grants or many journals have discontinued their charging policy for publication of research articles. The Pratt funded faculty, are however, very productive and have published over 300 publications on animal nutrition over the past five years.

**Summary**

The Pratt Funds continue to have significant impacts on the Virginia Tech programs in animal nutrition. The process of awarding the Pratt Funds to faculty, including the peer review process established for selection of proposals based on their scientific merits and potential to enhance animal nutrition programs, has greatly enhanced the quality of the programs and is enabling the faculty to become more competitive for external funding at the national level.

This year's carryover is already committed to equipment that was unable to be received in fiscal year 2020 due to COVID-19 related delays. The cost of this encumbered equipment totaled \$101,275 plus an additional \$42,100 which has been held up in the ordering process.