

# VETERINARY SPINAL MANIPULATIVE THERAPY



## CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table of contents                        | 2  |
| Letter to the prospective students:      | 3  |
| Mission Statement & Philosophy of School | 4  |
| Information about the founders & staff:  | 4  |
| Information about the center:            | 7  |
| Nondiscrimination law information:       | 7  |
| Licensing information:                   | 7  |
| Approval:                                | 8  |
| Confidentiality of records:              | 8  |
| Admission requirements:                  | 8  |
| Academic curriculum:                     | 9  |
| Financial information:                   | 11 |
| About the program:                       | 11 |
| Performance Evaluation:                  | 11 |
| Classroom conduct:                       | 12 |
| Passing Failing Notification             | 13 |
| Complaint Procedure                      | 13 |
| Attendance requirements:                 | 13 |
| Withdrawal from program:                 | 13 |
| Career opportunities:                    | 14 |
| Library:                                 | 15 |
| Directions:                              | 15 |

Dear Professional Student:

The Healing Oasis Wellness Center LLC, welcomes your interest in expanding your knowledge of alternative therapies for animals. It is a well-accepted fact that the public's demand for competent practitioners of integrative / complementary therapies have been increasing in recent years. The Healing Oasis Wellness Center is unique in providing treatment modalities in both conventional and integrative therapies, drawing from both western and eastern philosophies. Our co-founders (Dr. Pedro Luis Rivera and Michelle J. Rivera, MT, VDT) have over 35 years combined experience in teaching and delivering these services and have been the driving force since the school inception in 1999.

As of today, the veterinary medical and veterinary technician schools have not met the need or demand for these modalities. However, there has been an increase in week or weekend courses given to lay people, which are trying to meet these demands. Even though this is commendable, it is our belief that the public would be better served (as well as protected) if knowledgeable licensed health care professionals are the ones providing these services.

We know that our course curriculum will meet and exceed the demands for knowledge in these modalities. The small class size will give both students and teachers the very best educational experience in a caring and nurturing environment. As with any post-graduate professional school, you would not only learn from the instructors, but the instructors and classmates will benefit from each other's experience and knowledge as well.

We hope that you are ready to expand your horizons and gain knowledge in these modalities. Although it will be a long and arduous journey, once conquered, you will feel that it was a very worth-while endeavor.

Sincerely;

Pedro Luis Rivera, D.V.M.; President & Owner

Michelle J. Rivera, M.T.,V.D.T.; Vic-President & Owner

## **MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY FOR THE HEALING OASIS WELLNESS CENTER**

The staff at The Healing Oasis Wellness Center, LLC; is committed to ensure the delivery of effective, competent, compassionate and ethical use of integrative / alternative therapies for animals by providing quality, professional education in these modalities for licensed health care professionals.

In order to expand the therapeutic options available through complementary health care, we first have to quench the thirst for knowledge by health care professionals for these wellness and natural healing modalities.

Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy (VSMT) offers gentle and affordable services which encourages the body's own natural healing mechanisms. It does this without the use of chemical drugs or invasive medical procedures.

By educating professionals in this application of integrative therapies a great number of our animal patients will benefit from this health-enhancing approach.

The use of this modality **MUST** be in accordance with the State Veterinary Licensure and Regulation; and as per the definitions set forth by the individual State Practice Act in which the practitioner is licensed to practice.

Lab facility →



### **ABOUT THE CO-FOUNDERS & STAFF:**

**Dr. Pedro Luis Rivera** graduated from Purdue University, School of Veterinary Medicine in 1986. He has been practicing holistic veterinary medicine and in particular Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy for the last 10 years. He has successfully completed the certification program from the Options for Animals Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Center, which is sponsored by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AVCA). He has also completed all requirements for the Diplomat program sponsored by the AVCA. He was an instructor at the Options for Animals from early 1993 through November 1999. He was an active participant in the Alternative / Complementary

Therapy Modality Committee from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) which was activated in 1996 and 1999. He also successfully completed Level I and II from the New England School of Homeopathy. Dr. Rivera offers veterinary spinal manipulation, massage, rehabilitation therapy, Chinese herbology and western herbology and glandular therapy modalities to all of the patients that seek his help. He is an international speaker (current faculty at the European Academy of Veterinary Chiropractic based in Hamburg, Germany) on the topics of veterinary spinal manipulation, massage / rehabilitation therapy, western herbology and glandular (organ therapy) modalities. He is currently attending the Carrick Institute that offers Neurology Classes to those seeking certification by the Chiropractic Neurology Board. Co-owner of the Healing Oasis Wellness Center, LLC.

**Michelle J. Rivera, M.T, V.D.T.**, received her massage therapy training from The Chi Energy Center, in Madison, WI. She successfully finished the Chinese herbology course work from the Wisconsin Institute of Chinese Herbology and has added these modalities to the array of services that she and Dr. Rivera have been offering to their patients and clients at their veterinary hospital since 1993. She was an instructor at the Wisconsin Institute of Chinese Herbology Veterinary Herbal Course and she is currently the main instructor at the Veterinary Chinese Herbology classes from the Healing Oasis Wellness Center. Michelle has also been practicing Feng Shui for the last 8 years. She follows the Black Hat Tantric Sect philosophy as taught by Professor Lin Yun. In 1998 she traveled to Beijing, China and completed a clinic and lecture certificate program in Chinese herbology at the China-Beijing International Acupuncture Training Center. She is the main instructor of the state approved Veterinary Chinese Herbology program that is offered at The Healing Oasis Wellness Center. Co-owner of the Healing Oasis Wellness Center, LLC.

**Robert Blohowiak, DVM**

**Gregory Cramer, DC, PhD;** Dean of Anatomy and Professor at National University of Health Sciences. For a current CV please go to our website

**Carl DeStefano, DC;** International speaker and instructor at the Basic & Advanced Neurology Program

**Robert Gaston, DVM;** Instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Tom Gustafson, DVM;** Instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Dena Jerslid, DVM;** International speaker and instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Michael Kelly, DC, DACO:** Private practitioner and instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Annette M. Langlois, DC;** International speaker, instructor at the VSMT certification program and program director for the Canadian Animal Chiropractic program ([www.veterinarychiropractic.ca](http://www.veterinarychiropractic.ca)) For a current CV, please go into our website

**Sue Ann Lesser, DVM;** Instructor at the VSMT certification program as well as the Advanced Neurology certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Ken Main, DVM;** Instructor at the basic VSMT program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Donna Mertz, DVM:** Private practitioner and instructor at the basic VSMT program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Nora Moses, DC:** Private practitioner and instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Neal Sivula, DVM, PhD;** Associate professor MN Veterinary Medical School and instructor at the VSMT certification program as well as the Advanced Neurology certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Ines Wecker, DVM:** International speaker and Program Director at the Backbone Academy for Veterinary Chiropractic & Healing Arts (Sittensen, Germany; [www.backbon-academy.com](http://www.backbon-academy.com))

**Joe Whalen, DVM;** Private practitioner and instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Deanna Witte, DVM:** Private practitioner and instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV, please go into our website

**Dirk Yelinek, DVM;** Instructor at the VSMT certification program. For a current CV please go into our website



### **ABOUT THE STAFF:**

The staff and co-founders combined experience in their field of special interest, will allow the students to take advantage from an array of knowledge and clinical experiences that is second to none.

### **ABOUT THE CENTER:**

The Healing Oasis Wellness Center in Sturtevant, Wisconsin, is an organization offering a **Post-Graduate Professional Certification Program in Alternative / Integrative Therapy Modalities** and to the best of our knowledge, the first of its kind in the North American Continent since 1999. The course consists of 226 hours of post-graduate training that is designed to meet and exceed not only local or national standards as well.

The Center is located in a small town in the Southeast part of Wisconsin. It has easy access to the “interstate” system and there are plenty of hotels and stores within a 2 mile radius. **The physical location of the Center is 2555 Wisconsin St., Sturtevant, WI, 53177; 262-878-9549 or 262-886-6460Fax.** It consists of a 7000 sq. ft. building, with 3500 sq. ft. being used as a holistic veterinary hospital, 2000 sq. ft. of lecture facility and the rest is divided between the snack room, kitchen room and restrooms services.

The class size will be kept small so that a more personal and relaxed learning environment is maintained.

School  
Building→



### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Healing Oasis Wellness Center is in compliance with all requirements imposed by or pursuant to *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* and the regulations issued thereunder, to the end that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual preference or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored at this institution

### **LICENSING OF ALTERNATIVE / INTEGRATIVE THERAPIES:**

To this day, there is no governmental body that oversees any of the alternative / complementary therapies offered to non-human animals.

It is up to the ethical values of the individual to pursue the best post-graduate program available.

### **SCHOOL APPROVAL:**

The state approved programs being offered at The Healing Oasis Wellness Center have been approved by the Educational Approval Board of the State of Wisconsin. The VSMT program has also been approved by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (full approval) and by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards – RACE program (for continuing education).

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS:**

The Healing Oasis Wellness Center is aware of the confidential nature of student's records, both personal and academic; therefore, the school exercises extreme care and concern in recording and maintaining information. Such information will not be released to unauthorized persons or agencies without written consent from the student. The Center recognizes the student's right to access their own records. The school maintains attendance, examination and teacher progress reports on all students. These will be held for **5 years**. After the 5 year period only transcripts are kept.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

The following requirements are the minimum necessary that the staff feels would allow a student to pursue a successful path in this field.

1. Professionals registering from the North American Continent: Graduated from an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and American Chiropractic Association accredited Veterinary Medical and Chiropractic Medical accredited schools (by their respective Council on Education). **Please include a copy of your diploma**
2. Professionals registering from outside the North American Continent: Completed and graduated from a Veterinary Medical Program or Chiropractic Medical School (as viewed by the AVMA / ACA respective council on education). Must have pertinent Visa, diploma, and proper governmental licensure from the country in which they are currently practicing
3. Two character reference letters, one from a **non-family** member and one from an **employer**. If the applicant is self-employed, please provide us with a brief description of the practice & one from a colleague (non-family member)
4. Licensed veterinarians & licensed chiropractors please **include a copy** of the state license (current residence) that you are currently practicing under
5. Two passport-size photos
6. ALL licensed professional - please include a signed letter stating that you understand your state's / province rules and regulations as they apply to animal "chiropractic" or veterinary spinal manipulative therapy as set forth by their individual licensing boards.

The application deadline is 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the scheduled classes. We will continue to accept applicants up to the maximum number of students (16 – sixteen).

A deposit of **\$200.00** must be included with the application and the remaining tuition of **\$4,600.00 (for a total of \$4,800.00)** is due on the first day of school. A **non-refundable application fee of \$100.00** is included in the total tuition of the program.

The student will receive a letter (via USPS) or email confirming their reservation for this post-graduate training. **PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS.**

A brief interview is required for **all** participants before the program is started. **The interview will be held 1- 1 1/2 hrs on the first day of the module before classes are scheduled to start.** Please call the center for an appointment.

**The Healing Oasis Wellness Center will offer no advanced standing for participants in weekend seminars, video taped seminars, correspondence seminars, "gained" experience or any type of seminars**

**CORE CURRICULUM:**

Anatomy: Review the pertinent anatomy as it applies to the to the application of veterinary spinal manipulative therapy. Students will also view dissection as part of the educational process

TOTAL: 16HRS

Neurology (Basic & Advanced): An essential part of veterinary spinal manipulation is to understand and thus maintain a functional nervous system. This class will emphasize the function of the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system. Neurologic mechanism by which VSMT causes changes will also be discussed

TOTAL: 20 HRS

VSC & Its Scientific validity: This class will present up to date available research that not only validates the spinal manipulation health care modality but will further expand knowledge of functional neurology & the vertebral hypomobility / subluxation complex

TOTAL: 7 HRS

Biomechanics: This class will explain all the biomechanical changes that occur when the body performs not only normal functions, but the pathophysiologic changes that occur under stress. Saddle fitting is included under this section

TOTAL: 6 HRS

Ethics and Legalities: This class will prepare the students to deal with the every day legal issues that will be faced in both conventional or alternative / complementary practice

TOTAL: 4 HRS

Rehabilitation Therapy: This class will give introductory information and techniques that can be used as adjunct modalities to speed up the healing process of the body

TOTAL: 8 HRS

Alternative / Integrative Therapy Modalities: Introductory lectures to provide practitioners with the basic understanding of the pertinent aspects of the use of acupuncture, rehabilitation therapy, reiki, acupressure and magnetic therapy

TOTAL: 4 HRS

Veterinary Spinal Manipulation Techniques Lecture: This class will show basic techniques that can be used to adjust specific segments of the spine at the cervical, thoracic, lumbar, extremities, sacropelvic, sternum, logan & cranial (sutures) regions among others

TOTAL: 19 HRS

Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Techniques Laboratory (Hands-on): This lab will be utilized to practice and master the techniques taught at the basic VSMT class. Both small and large animals will be available for application. In module II, the students will start also taking cases, adjusting, re-assessing and taking care of client animals in a clinical setting

TOTAL: 93 HRS

Case Presentations: Each student will present 2 cases in which they have utilize VSMT and explain the reasoning behind the diagnosis and treatment of each case

TOTAL: 4 HRS

Philosophy: A synopsis of Spinal Manipulation philosophy will include the many differing views offered from the late 1800's to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

TOTAL: 4 HRS

Adjunct Veterinary Diagnosis: This class will emphasize the “diagnosis” aspect of case management based on the “case approach. Ideas and standard operating procedures will be given, so that case intake and progress plan will become second nature and proper therapeutic protocols and a realistic prognosis can be achieved and communicated to the owners of our patients

TOTAL: 8 HRS

Pathology: This class will review common veterinary medical pathologies that are encountered on a day to day basis and that can benefit from VSMT. Emphasis on when and when not to adjust will be given

TOTAL: 6 HRS

Radiology: This class will review the normal vs. abnormal radiological findings at the cervical, thoraco-lumbar, sacro-pelvic & extremity regions. Emphasis will be given to present clinical findings that will be encountered on an every day practice / examination

TOTAL: 6 HRS

General & Infectious Diseases: This class will present general information that must be kept in mind when assessing a patient. Pharmacology, types of surgery, diseases (infectious and zoonotic) & basic physiology will be discussed

TOTAL: 5 HRS

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

**TOTAL COST FOR ENTIRE PROGRAM** is \$4,800.00

Payment is expected in full during registration day, interview day or first day of the first module. Students will have a list of suggested textbooks (from which material will be utilized throughout the program) and one required textbook that can be purchased through amazon.com or through any bookstore.

For other expenses, please see section under "Performance Evaluation". The Healing Oasis Wellness Center is not approved to offer any federal / bank financial aid or assistance.

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM:**

The curriculum consists of a total of **226** hours of supervised instruction. There is a **maximum of 16** (sixteen) students per class and we will try to keep a maximum ratio of 3 or 4 (three or four) students to 1 (one) instructor for practical labs. Once the class has started, no other student will be allowed to join even if there have been drop outs or dismissals.

Students will have homework and reading assignment during each module. This homework will be reviewed and returned to each student by the end of the following module. Each student must present a total of 2 cases. A "case" constitutes either a patient that has been brought or sent to you for a consultation for VSMT care; their primary complaint, objective findings, physical findings and treatment / progress plan.

A total of 5 modules will encompass an entire "class" or "complete curriculum". Each module consists of 5 days beginning **Wednesday** (1:00pm – 7:00pm), **Thursdays / Fridays and Saturdays** (8:00am - 12pm, 1pm - 7pm), and **Sunday** (8:00am-1:00pm). Depending on the module, longer hours might be required.

The scheduled dates for modules are as follows:

SEE ATTACHED INFORMATION or contact our website at [WWW.THEHEALINGOASIS.COM](http://WWW.THEHEALINGOASIS.COM) .

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:**

Students are evaluated by a variety of methods that include written tests, practical tests (small and large animals), anatomy and oral examinations. Each student's performance will be discussed & evaluated between a committee composed of all of the instructors of the given module and the individual student (one at a time).

To successfully finish the program, and **receive the Certification in VSMT** a **76%** minimal grade must be attained on **EACH** of the following individual sections: WRITTEN

TEST; CANINE PRACTICAL; EQUINE PRACTICAL; ORAL EXAMINATION and ANATOMY.

Grading scale is as follows:

A = 93 - 100% B = 85 - 92% C = 76 - 84% Fail = less than 76%

Please be advised that a student **must** maintain a passing grade (76% or higher) when going into the fourth module. If the student has not achieved a passing grade by the end of the third module, said student will be evaluated by a committee of instructor (including the program director) and suggestions or options would be discussed at that time. If it is suggested for the student to repeat any of the modules and / or finish the program with the following class; the student must understand that all expenses are their responsibility (see below).

Again, a panel of instructors (minimum of 3 including the program director) will provide some ideas on how the student can improve on their performance. If a special homework is assigned to a student, they will have until the following module to present their findings (classroom presentation and a maximum of 45 minutes)

The estimated expenses to repeat any module would be \$690.00 (cost of auditing a module) plus their personal traveling expenses. Under no circumstance, a student that cannot achieve passing grade will be allowed to finish the program as "auditors".

#### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT:**

As in any other professional school, professional standards are upheld:

1. No smoking on premises
2. No talking during lecture time
3. Respect each other's right to have an education.
4. Respect each others beliefs and knowledge
5. Under no circumstances will any abuse or rough handling of animals
6. Dishonesty is not tolerated (includes vandalism of school property)
7. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs in any part of the classroom or grounds at any time will not be tolerated or allowed
8. Disrespectful use of language or inappropriate physical contact with individuals while involved in school related activities will not be tolerated
9. If the student appears impaired putting itself or any of the classmates in jeopardy (from the safety standpoint) they will be dismissed immediately
10. Student must maintain an average of 76% or higher (see section under performance evaluation)

Any student, who doesn't comply with the above simple rules, will be dismissed. If dismissal is due to any of the above "rules of conduct" readmission will **not** be allowed and reimbursement will be based on the established "pro rata" refund (see section under "Withdrawal from the Program")

**PASSING / FAILING NOTIFICATION:**

Students will be notified within a maximum of 4 weeks if they have successfully completed the program or not. Certification in Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy will be awarded upon successful completion of this program.

**COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:**

All complaints regarding conduct, grading or any concerns; should be given in writing to either Dr. Pedro L. Rivera or Michelle J. Rivera, M.T., V.D.T. If the attendee doesn't feel that the complaint has been handled correctly, then the next step would be to contact the Wisconsin Educational Approval Board at: c/o Mr. Pat Sweeney, Educational Specialist; Wisconsin Education Approval Board, 30 W. Mifflin St.; 9<sup>th</sup> Floor; PO Box 8696; Madison, WI 53708-8696 or contact the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training, 1722 N. Street NW., Washington, DC 20036; 202-955-1113

**ATTENDANCE:**

A 100% attendance is required for the lecture and technique classes. A student will be considered tardy for class if more than 20 minutes late. If a student is tardy 3 consecutive times (60 minutes in sequence within one module or within one day of a module), it will count as an absence. If a student knows they will be absent or tardy prior to class, they must call or inform the center for an excused absence.

Although leave of absence is not encouraged, there are certain extraordinary cases, such as death in the family or severe illnesses that will cause the student to miss classes. If leave of absence is for more than 6 months, then the student must re-apply to enter (or continue) the program. Extra tutorial time (at \$150.00 per hour) and make-up reading assignments and quizzes will be assigned to complete the missing work.

**There are NO probational periods, students must complete all the required work and maintain minimum grade standards to continue to the final module (fifth module)**

**WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM:**

*If, for any reason, the student withdraws or is dismissed by the school prior to attending classes, there will be no charge to the student. All moneys except the application fee of \$100 will be reimbursed to the student.*

*The student will receive a full refund of all money paid (minus the deposit of \$100.00) if the student cancels within the first three days of the first module of the program.*

*A student who withdraws or is dismissed after attending at least one class, but before completing 60% of the program in the current enrollment period, is entitled to a pro rata refund as follows:*

| <u>AT LEAST</u> | <u>BUT LESS THAN</u> | <u>REFUND OF TUITION</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 UNIT          | 10%                  | 90%                      |
| 10%             | 20%                  | 80%                      |
| 20%             | 30%                  | 70%                      |
| 30%             | 40%                  | 60%                      |
| 40%             | 50%                  | 50%                      |
| 50%             | 60%                  | 40%                      |
| 60%             | NO                   | NO REFUND                |

*As part of this policy, the school may retain a one time application fee of no more than \$100. The School will make every effort to refund prepaid amounts for books, supplies and other charges, as long as they have been returned in good condition. A student will receive the refund within 40 working days of termination date. If a student withdraws after completing 60% of the instruction, the school may refund a pro rata amount; if withdrawal is due to mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control, a written notice of withdrawal is not required.*

**CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:**

Upon graduation from the school students will be exceptionally qualified to offer a variety of professional services that can be used to enhance conventional veterinary medicine. All veterinarians will have to comply with the bylaws and regulation of the AVMA and state practice acts in regards to Alternative / Integrative Therapy Modalities. The school will offer ethical and business lectures on how to use and how to market the newly acquired knowledge.

The Healing Oasis Wellness Center does not guarantee employment to any of the participants during or after the program. However, employment assistance will be offered through a job placement bulletin board and utilizing a referral list of students that have successfully completed the program.



Dr. Gary Goodell teaching

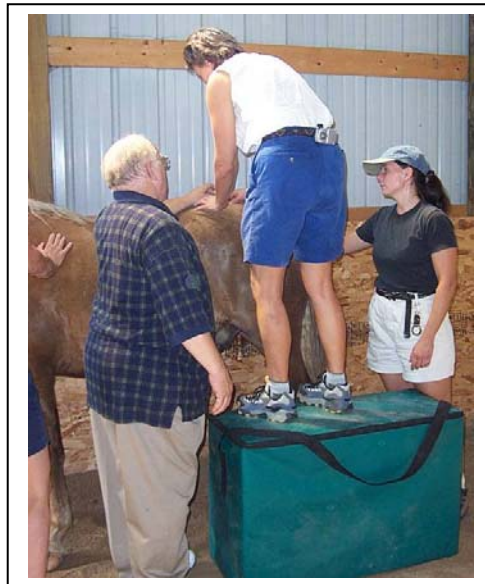
**LIBRARY:**

The school will have a separate office which will serve as a library. All required books and suggested reading materials will always be available to the students.

**DIRECTIONS TO THE CENTER:**

From Chicago, take I94 North (West) to Wisconsin. Take exit #335 (Hwy 11) and at the stop sign, take a right (going East). Go about 2.1 mile and you will see a sign 96<sup>th</sup> Street or “Wisconsin St.”. Take a left on Wisconsin St (going North) and 1/4 mile down the road (on East side or right side) you will see the Center.

From Milwaukee, take I94 South (East) to Hwy 20 (exit #333) and at the stop sign make a left (going East). Go about 2.5 - 3 miles to 96<sup>th</sup> Street or “Wisconsin St” and take a right (going South). The building will be on the East side (left side) of the road about 1/4 - 1/2 mile down the road.



Dr. Ken Main with two students