

Health Care Success Story

Dr. Reid Garfield

*Animal Dermatology Referral Clinic at
Veterinary Referral Center of North Texas, Dallas*

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PHOTO

JASON JANIK/Special to DMN

Dr. Reid Garfield owns the Animal Dermatology Referral Clinic in Dallas.

Age: 47

Position: Dermatologist, owner of Animal Dermatology Referral Clinic

Years in current position: 3 1/2 as owner; 10 as associate veterinarian

Education: Bachelor's degree in biomedical science, bachelor's degree in veterinary science and doctor of veterinary medicine, Texas A&M University; residency in veterinary dermatology, Animal Dermatology Referral Clinic; diplomate, American College of Veterinary Dermatology

How did you get your foot in the door? "I got my foot in the door to veterinary medicine when I began working at a small animal veterinary hospital at age 15. I developed a strong interest in veterinary medicine and strong work ethic working for Drs. Paul Bilger and Lloyd Reedy while I was in high school and on breaks from college as an undergraduate. Following veterinary school, I worked for Dr. Bilger as an associate veterinarian in a general practice for nine years."

What is your toughest professional challenge? "Our patients are referred to us from general practices because the cases are difficult to diagnose or difficult to manage, so many of our patients' cases are challenging. The most challenging are those with multiple diseases where the treatment of one of the problems exacerbates the other. We manage difficult allergic patients, poorly understood syndromes of hair loss, animals with autoimmune skin disease and chronic parasitic skin diseases."

What are the characteristics of an indispensable employee? "An indispensable employee is one who is honest, dependable and positive, as well as can work well with fellow employees as a team. Although our patients are animals, communication, understanding and empathy for their human owners are necessary skills in a specialty veterinary practice. We can teach everything else."

What are the hiring trends in your industry? What positions? "There are less than 20 dermatology residencies available in the United States with fewer than 10 ... that become board certified veterinary dermatologists each year."

- Sarah Godinez