

Want to learn more?

New veterinary technician intern classes will begin each year in January and June. For more information about this program, contact Lisa Bryant at 785-532-3941 or lbryant@vet.k-state.edu.

Training Technicians



Katherine Barker and Lisa Bryant played an important role in implementing the Veterinary Technician Internship Program.

A veterinary technician is a loving hand, a lifesaver, a teacher and so much more. They are essential to any veterinary practice, often working behind the scenes to provide every patient with compassionate and thorough care.

At the Veterinary Health Center, we train everyone from veterinary students to board-certified clinicians, and now, veterinary technicians. We are happy to introduce our Veterinary Technician Internship Program.

This internship program is a one year, post-graduate rotating small animal internship designed to give new technician graduates experience in an academic environment, training with registered veterinary technicians and board-certified veterinary specialists.

"This program will provide veterinary technicians the opportunity to expand and refine their skills," said Lisa Bryant, director of the Veterinary Technician Internship Program.

Technicians accepted into the internship program will have the opportunity to rotate through core services including internal medicine, radiology, surgery, anesthesia, ICU along with other elective services. "Interns will have opportunity to assist with complex cases and procedures not normally seen and performed in a general practice setting," Lisa said.

Katharine Barker, registered veterinary technician, interned at the VHC this past year. "My internship allowed me to expand my knowledge and skills as an RVT," Katharine said. "In school you only had time to do technical skills once or twice. During my internship, I worked primarily with small animals and was able to see and do many things you wouldn't routinely do as a veterinary technician in a private clinic."

This program allows the VHC to develop relationships with schools of veterinary technology and their students, which benefits everyone. "As part of the recruitment program, our registered veterinary technicians travel to technician schools and present lectures and labs to the students educating them about VHC specialty services and the veterinary technician role in a specialty hospital. Academia can be very intimidating to both new and seasoned technicians; we're working to take some of that mystery and intimidation out of the equation," Lisa said.

After the internship, the technician interns may apply for full-time positions at the VHC as they are available. "I have accepted a position in the Oncology department starting in August," Katherine said. Katherine chose to stay at the VHC because the quality of medicine practiced here makes a difference in our patients' lives. ▼

Dystocia Distress

Liesal Henson watched Hansi go hide as she normally did when it was time to lay her eggs. Hansi, a 7-year-old Cockatiel had laid many eggs in her years and Liesal was used to her routine of hiding as she laid an egg.

This particular session started the same way. Hansi went to her usual spots, but Liesal noticed Hansi seemed to be straining and she was not producing an egg. This continued for a few days and Liesal knew something was wrong. "Hansi was just not herself," Liesal said.

Liesal began doing her own research. A book about bird care led Liesal to believe Hansi might be suffering from egg binding which is the inability to pass an egg.

Liesal and Hansi made the trip to the Veterinary Health Center. Dr. Dana Lindeman, exotics and zoological medicine intern, examined Hansi and palpated a large abdominal mass.

Dr. Lindeman and Dr. David Eshar, assistant professor of exotics and zoological medicine, ordered radiographs for Hansi which, as expected, revealed an egg of normal size and shape - Hansi just needed assistance passing it.

Egg binding, or dystocia, can happen as a result of calcium deficiency. "Birds in captivity require a well-balanced diet of wholesome fruits, vegetables and avian pellets and minimal seeds and human food," Dr. Eshar said. "Female birds use

large amounts of calcium to produce their eggs and then there is not enough calcium for muscle contractions to push the egg out."

Hansi received calcium gluconate injections and fluids at the VHC while she rested overnight in an incubator.

"I called at 9 in the morning and Hansi had still not passed the egg," Liesal said. It did not take long after Liesal's call for Hansi to make progress. The zoological medicine team gave Hansi another treatment and approximately 20 minutes later, at 9:35 am she laid a perfectly normal egg.

"Not all cases of dystocia or egg binding can resolve in such an uneventful manner," Dr. Eshar said. "Often times surgical intervention is required including a full abdominal surgery, which would require a specialist's knowledge and expertise to perform this high-risk micro-surgery."

Hansi's quick recovery allowed her to return home with Liesal. "She's my pal and my pet. She's a big part of my life," Liesal said, glad to have Hansi back. ▼

