Veterinary Student Externships

2014 List of Opportunities
PROJECT-BASED OPPORTUNITIES:

Community Animal Health Centre, Entebbe, Uganda

With an increased demand for private veterinary services in Uganda, the Centre was created with a mission to provide affordable veterinary care to both domestic and wild animals. The Centre also provides disease surveillance services to assist the Uganda Wildlife Authority and the Ministry of Animal Industry and Fisheries. The Centre supports disease control programs, promotes public health and conservation education, and provides temporary shelter for stray animals. Dr. David Hyeroba serves as the veterinarian on staff at the Centre. He received his veterinary degree from Makerere University in Uganda, and went on to obtain a Masters in International Animal Health from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He is currently working on his PhD on the ecology of diseases of veterinary importance in Uganda. Dr. Hyeroba is committed to the health and management of Uganda's wildlife and domestic animals, and is experienced in wildlife capture, rescue, and treatment.

This externship offers the opportunity for a combination of clinical work and a student research project. Dr. Hyeroba has a busy clinical practice in Entebbe, and students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of hands-on work to enhance their skills. Community based activities such as vaccination and spay clinics are common. Additionally, the team will travel to communities surrounding Kibale National Forest in order to sample for pathogens shared between humans, canines, and primates in the area. There is room for the development of student-driven research related to this work. Occasionally there may be an opportunity to assist with chimpanzee field immobilization and treatment.

Accommodation while in Entebbe (majority of your time) will consist of comfortable Bed & Breakfast lodging with basic amenities such as electricity, running water, and access to internet. When traveling in the field accommodation might be more basic; it is advised that the student be flexible and prepared for rougher conditions. Entebbe is an urban area in Uganda with access to basic amenities such as lodging, groceries, restaurants, and some social activity. Entebbe is approximately 30 minutes drive from Kampala, the largest city in Uganda, and home of Makerere Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. SHF Assistant Director of Veterinary Operations, Dr. Innocent Rwego, is based in Kampala, and thus would be close by for any assistance necessary during the externship. An approximate budget of $550/week has been developed for this opportunity. Please contact Dr. Adams for more information. For a more personal account of working at the CAHC, please request for Dr. Adams to put you in contact with a former extern.

http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/wildlife-veterinarians-project.htm
Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project, Ruhengeri, Rwanda

For nearly 20 years, veterinarians have been helping mountain gorillas survive by providing them with life-saving veterinary care for human-caused or life-threatening illnesses and injuries. The project began as one veterinarian, but has grown now to include an entire team of veterinarians who work together to track ailing gorillas, and treat them when needed, in their native habitat. Most recently, it has joined forces with the UC Davis Wildlife Health Center to advance its One Health approach to conservation.

MGVP’s veterinary staff—collectively, the Gorilla Doctors—are a unique, diverse, and interesting group of people. The in-country field vets are stationed in their home countries, either Rwanda, Uganda, or the DRC, while the regional vets and project director move about. MGVP’s regional headquarters are located in Ruhengeri (Musanze), Rwanda for two main reasons: most of the world’s habituated mountain gorillas live in Rwanda, and Ruhengeri itself is about halfway between the border with Uganda to the northeast and Congo to the west.

Though a subset of the six field vets will sometimes work together on a mountain gorilla when veterinary intervention is required, this happens only a few times a year. Typically, vets are out and about alone or in pairs. They gather monthly for regional veterinary rounds so that they can share case experiences and exchange information.

Externs do not accompany veterinarians or behavioral researchers into the park because access to mountain gorillas is strictly controlled by the conservation offices of the three countries in which they work. However, there are many other ways in which externs can contribute to the MGVP. For example, the MGVP is involved in improving domestic animal, wildlife, employee and community health through special initiatives in the areas surrounding the park. Externs can be utilized to aid in capacity building of the region, and may also help with gorilla related projects in the lab. Administrative and computer data entry volunteers are also welcome. Externs may work on trapping and sampling small animals for surveillance of diseases of concern, as part of MGVP’s work with USAID PREDICT. Opportunities for research are in development and more information will be provided shortly.

http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/mountain-gorilla-veterinary-project.htm

Note that it will be required for the student to apply to the MGVP Volunteer Program in addition to the application through SHF. If interested in applying please contact Dr. Adams for the MGVP form. Students are encouraged to apply well in advance of their anticipated externship, as spaces fill up quickly. The cost is approximately $250/month room and board (breakfast and lunch) while staying in the MGVP compound in Ruhengeri. The compound is simple but comfortable with electricity and plumbing, and intermittent internet access. Volunteers are advised to bring an additional $25-100/week to cover costs of local transportation, meals outside the compound, and miscellaneous purchases.
Department of Wildlife and Aquatic Resources Management of Umutara Polytechnic University, Nyagatare, Rwanda

Rwanda is a country still on the mend from the devastating effects of the genocide in 1994. In an effort to create educational opportunities for Rwandan and east African citizens, Umutara Polytechnic was founded in 2004 as a public institution of higher learning. The Veterinary Faculty was established in 2006 with 13 students and three professors, and has expanded to its current enrollment of 111 students with 13 professors. The program offers an Advanced Diploma of higher education in animal health and production, as well as a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine honors degree.

Within the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine lies the newly formed Department of Wildlife and Aquatic Resources Management, headed by Dr. Ann Apio. Dr. Apio received her Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Makerere University in Uganda, and went on to complete a PhD in biology in 2009 from Potsdam University in Germany. Her interests lie in molecular behavioral ecology and parasitology. She currently runs the department and teaches ecology to graduate students at the University.

The student will have the opportunity to conduct research in one of the following areas:

1) Large ungulate census in areas adjacent to Akagera National Park.

2) Gastrointestinal parasites of baboons and vervet monkeys along the Muvumba riverine forest.

3) Freshwater snail collection for species identification of zoonotic Schistosoma along the Muvumba river.

There will also be opportunities to participate in any wildlife immobilizations or health checks that the Department conducts, as well as other field excursions. It would be possible to arrange a visit to view the Mountain Gorillas while in country.

http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/umutara-polytechnic-university-rwanda-project.htm

Accommodation and meals will be more primitive in Rwanda than in other more developed areas of Africa. While in town and working at the University the student would stay at a comfortable B&B with electricity, running water, and some internet access. When traveling to the field for sample collection, the student would need to arrange transport (car or motorbike). An approximate budget of $375-500/week has been developed for this project. Please contact Dr. Adams for more information.
AWARE: Animal & Wildlife Area Research & Rehabilitation, Zimbabwe

Veterinary student externs can go ‘behind the scenes’ with the AWARE vets in Zimbabwe during the months of May to September 2013, assisting them on a variety of wildlife and rural expeditions. Students can participate in everything from sterilization campaigns to immobilization of wildlife for research or treatment purposes. AWARE can accommodate a maximum of 6 students at one time; the minimum required stay is 2 weeks. (email Dr. Adams for a detailed calendar of the AWARE work schedule).

**Sterilization Campaigns:** Participate with Zimbabwean veterinarians in a small animal sterilization and health care campaign in some of the poorest areas of the country. The AWARE Trust Sterilization Program works in impoverished communal land villages mostly within the six Trans Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), also known as Peace Parks, located in Zimbabwe. TFCAs usually comprise trans-border National Parks and Wildlife Areas as well as the communal land villages that they are contiguous with. The concept of TFCAs is that by including the villages in the TFCAs, they will benefit directly from increased tourism in the area, while appreciating the need to conserve the adjacent natural ecosystems.

**African Rhino Conservation:** Participate in conservation efforts designed to help save the dwindling black and white rhino populations in Zimbabwe. Work with wildlife vets de-horning and ear notching or translocating rhino. Help monitor the rhino by tracking them on foot patrols or with tracking devices, and observing them up close, or helping decipher footage from camera traps. Help National Park rangers with continued monitoring of the rhino population and anti-poaching operations.

**Bovine tuberculosis in lions project:** Participate in conservation efforts designed to determine the status of lion populations in Gonarezhou National Park (GNP), Zimbabwe, with particular reference to the impact (if any) of Bovine Tuberculosis (BTB). Help track wild lions via dirt road spoor counts, and camera trap sightings. Help set baits and calling stations for lions in the park at night. Assist with lion immobilizations and BTB testing. Be part of an ongoing program helping National Parks rangers with continued monitoring of lion population performance.

**Buffalo disease testing:** Participate in conservation efforts to test buffalo in Zimbabwe for Bovine Tuberculosis (BTB), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and other diseases. Wild African buffalo are notoriously dangerous animals. Experience the adrenaline of being part of a team that mass captures them (in a boma) or immobilizes them individually from a helicopter for disease testing purposes. Learn how to process blood samples for disease testing purposes.

**Rehabilitation.** Participate in conservation efforts in Zimbabwe by providing veterinary treatment to sick or injured wild animals on an individual basis. **Donkey clinics.** Participate in efforts to improve donkey welfare in Zimbabwe in a SPANA funded donkey project, whilst educating donkey owners about proper animal husbandry and draught techniques. (**Arguably the best way to experience the ‘real’ village culture in Zimbabwe.) Participate in disease surveillance in donkeys and research on the efficacy of veterinary interventions in this species.

**Due to the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the work, AWARE may need to occasionally change the schedule of activities listed in the detailed work calendar at short notice and cannot guarantee that students will participate in a project they specifically request. AWARE also reserves the right to cancel an internship up to 30 days before placement if that particular period is under-subscribed, as taking only one extra person may require an extra vehicle, which is too cost prohibitive.**

[http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/AWARE-project.htm](http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/AWARE-project.htm)
Your accommodation will vary depending on the Project, but be prepared to camp or stay in more primitive facilities for travel to remote areas. In Harare your accommodation will be in a room in one of the vet’s houses, which will be very comfortable with full amenities. The weekly budget is $750 which includes all meals, accommodation and transport (excluding flights and National Parks fees). This opportunity has additional details available upon request. Please contact Dr. Adams for the complete description.
Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

The Trust is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance and promote environmental conservation in Southern Africa through hands-on wildlife research, management of a wildlife medical care facility and orphanage, and the education and empowerment of indigenous resources through active involvement in conservation training and community outreach programs. The Trust is currently building a wildlife laboratory and clinic. This facility will be fully operational and equipped for a higher quality of treatment for injured, abandoned, orphaned or any wildlife needing additional care. The Trust will also use the lab and clinic as a base, as it is situated within Victoria Falls National Park. A wildlife disease monitoring program is already underway in conjunction with the Zimbabwe Department of Veterinary Services Wildlife Unit, in which samples can be processed and either analyzed or sent on to the respective specialists in the field. This facility will be a central destination for visiting externs, in particular those with an interest in conducting research.

Examples of some of the potential extern work includes: testing of cattle for zoonotic disease; assisting with wildlife that has been immobilized for disease diagnostics; helping treat any injured wildlife in the field or clinic; volunteering in the laboratory on specific disease testing as well as general wildlife health; monitoring of wildlife orphan health and treatment of any new animals that arrive at clinic; evaluation of wildlife orphan socialization pre/post release.

Specific diseases of interest to the Wild Horizons Trust (and available for the development of student research projects) include: foot and mouth disease, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis, rift valley fever, and tick-borne diseases such as babesiosis, etc. Banked and fresh samples are readily available from cattle and buffalo throughout Zimbabwe. Additional diseases of cattle such as lumpy skin disease, other skin diseases, and parasites are of interest. Other livestock diseases in which testing and diagnostic protocols need to be established include heartwater & African swine fever. There are many opportunities for disease diagnostic investigation. There may be opportunities for genetic research in rhinos for anti-poaching purposes, and for investigation of anthrax outbreaks in wildlife during the dry season.

TB testing of cattle and wildlife in Malilangwe takes place during the end of February, mid-end July, and November. Vaccination/sterilization campaign in Victoria Falls takes place in July.

For specific information about activities during your dates of interest, please contact Dr. Adams.

Budget is $650 per week for placement in the Victoria Falls location (*2 week minimum); $650 per week for dual placement in Victoria Falls and South East Zimbabwe (*4 week minimum). Students can stay at the Victoria Falls location for longer blocks if desired, for example if performing laboratory research. All prices include room, board and transport in country. Accommodation is either in a local B&B or tented chalets, both will have running water. While staying in Victoria Falls there is electricity and internet access at the laboratory facility. For the dual internship in the lowveld, there is electricity. For projects including TB testing of cattle and wildlife at Malilangwe, an additional cost of $150 per trip to Malilangwe is required.

http://www.thesilentheroes.org/projects/wild-horizons-project.htm
Community Veterinary Clinics, South African Veterinary Association & the Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

In conjunction with the South African Veterinary Association, Community Veterinary Clinics delivers primary veterinary care to those communities in South Africa otherwise unable to access services offered by private practitioners. Clinics focus on a combination of veterinary care and education for owners. Animals are vaccinated, sterilized, and additional issues are addressed such as minor wounds and emergencies. Educational information is distributed in an effort to raise awareness to the issues of humane care of pets. Students can participate in a variety of clinics located throughout the communities of South Africa, using the Veterinary University in Pretoria as a home base. More information to be provided on this opportunity. Please contact Dr. Adams if you are interested.

The student will be able to live on campus or could choose from a variety of accommodation from budget to moderate. If living on campus the student would have access to the Small Animal Department, University library, and would have access to meals in the school cafeteria. Car rental is an option if the student wishes to stay off-campus, or for restaurants, shopping, sight-seeing, or general activities off-campus. Plan to budget $200-300/week for accommodation/food/transport, depending on accommodation type and car rental. There would also be the opportunity for the student to socialize with the local and international veterinary students on campus and arrange for travel with them. Pretoria is a large city with most of the modern amenities found in the US. A more detailed budget can be worked out once a student has identified interest in the project.

http://www.communityvet.co.za/
ADDITIONAL NON-PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY SHF:
(these projects are offered through partnerships with SHF)

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre, Malawi

Lilongwe Wildlife Centre is Malawi’s only sanctuary for rescued, orphaned and injured wild animals. It was originally set up in 2007 thanks to a Trust of passionate local patrons, the Department of National Parks & Wildlife and members of the Born Free Foundation. The government granted the Trust the concession to 90 hectares of wilderness right in the heart of the city, effectively giving it similar protection to that of a national park. Wherever possible, rescued and orphaned animals are returned back to the wild, though LLWC also offers lifelong sanctuary for those animals who cannot be released in the wild.

The LLWC has a veterinarian on staff and externs will participate in all veterinary activities. These may include quarantine exams, biannual health exams, scheduled and emergency procedures, pre-release health checks, and preventative tests like fecal exams. As well, externs will participate in other aspects of wildlife rehabilitation such as orphan care, primate care, and behavioral observations. Students will also participate in an ongoing research project comparing fecal pathogen diversity between captive and wild animals.

The cost is approximately $550/week for a 4 week stay (slightly more for shorter stays and slightly less for longer stays) and includes accommodation, basic food, airport transfers, & work related transport. Accommodation is mixed dorm-style with electricity, a kitchen, lounge area, bathroom and hot showers. Flights and insurance are the responsibility of the student.

www.lilongwewildlife.org
Nakavango Wildlife Veterinary Program, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

The Nakavango Conservation Program has five major focal areas: •Education •Conservation Management •Conservation Research Projects •Community Development •Sustainability

CONServation Research Projects The research projects are primarily aimed at gaining a better knowledge and stronger understanding of specific species, enabling more informed decision making regarding species conservation action plans.

Sustainability All the facilities on the reserve, including the student facility, are committed to “green” operations in order to achieve balance with and minimize impact on the natural environment, and create greater awareness about our footprint on our planet.

Conservation Management Volunteers can expect to get involved practically in conservation management practices, all of which are vital for the successful operations of the game reserve.

Community Development The Nakavango Conservation Program is proudly associated with the Children In The Wilderness Foundation, one of Wilderness Safaris’ outreach programs based at Victoria Falls.

Budget available upon request. For full details of the program please request a brochure from Dr. Adams.

Accommodation: Volunteers are accommodated in our purpose-built student program facility, called Camp Nakavango, at the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve.
Transkei Animal Wellbeing Initiative, South Africa

The Transkei Animal Wellbeing Initiative (TAWI) operates a primary animal health care (PAHC) service to 10 communities in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, primarily for domestic dogs. The initiative exemplifies One Health, with a focus on improving the health of both the people and domestic animals within the communities served.

The veterinary student extern will have the opportunity to conduct research relevant to disease transmission and/or prevention at the domestic animal/human interface. This externship is in development, and more details will follow.

Budget details to follow~

http://www.transkeidogs.co.za/
University of Pretoria One Health Community Work

This externship is currently being developed; please check back in a few weeks for more complete details. This opportunity will focus on disease at the domestic/wildlife/human interface, with a combination of field and laboratory work. The student will have access to the University of Pretoria laboratories, and can stay at the University for the laboratory portion of the externship. The student may do field work at the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station in the Kruger National Park (http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=15013) or at the Mnisi community veterinary clinic. There is a medical clinic (for people) nearby, run by Wits University, so the opportunity for comparative disease studies are possible.

Budget information to follow~