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NEWS & EVENTS

Three Individuals. Three Individualized Learning Experiences.
One Veterinary Clinic.

The quest for the ideal preceptorship can be daunting.

University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine students are fortunate to have an experienced guide to assist them: Student Services Coordinator Angela Tennison, DVM.

Tennison tries hard to listen to the students' interests and find a preceptorship location — clinic, hospital, or other business — that meets the individual's goals. She also aims to find veterinarians who enjoy teaching.

Recently, the ideal fit for three CVM students happened to be Brentwood Animal Hospital.

Ashley Seder, John McCarty and Timothy Hutson each served a preceptorship under the tutelage of Dr. William Shore, a managing partner of the clinic and a proud MU alumnus.

Shore attended the University of Missouri and graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology in 1974 and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1979. Today, he and his colleagues, many of who are also MU alumni, welcome MU students to work alongside them in the clinic.

Fourth-year CVM student Ashley Seder spent two weeks with Brentwood Animal Hospital at different times. "Everything worked out and I loved my experience so much that I decided to have a second go."

One of the highlights of Seder's preceptorship was being able to explore her interest in acupuncture under the tutelage of Dr. Sherry Headrick, who provides acupuncture and physical rehabilitation one day a week at Brentwood Animal Hospital. "It was fascinating to see alternative medicine in action, and Dr. Headrick was eager to discuss her training and the benefits she has seen in some of her patients."

"The most important lesson that I took away from this preceptorship was being able to work with your fellow veterinarians and staff as a team," Seder said. "Brentwood Animal Hospital is a shining example of teamwork."

Seder enjoyed the people and the atmosphere of the clinic, and the way everyone was eager to answer her questions and share stories and advice.

"Dr. Shore told me a story about how he gained an internship by agreeing to suture a wound on



Ashley Seder

the spot during his interview. The veterinarian was impressed because other applicants had declined because they didn't feel comfortable," Seder recalled. From this, she said she learned that even if you don't feel particularly confident, you have the knowledge base and the capability to perform, and accepting the challenge will set you apart.

Seder's advice to preceptors, "Keep an open mind when entering a preceptorship, ask questions about why things are done the way they are, ask to participate in procedures."

It was Dr. Shore's enthusiasm for veterinary medicine and the reputation of his clinic that led fourth-year student Timothy Hutson to choose Brentwood Animal Hospital.

"Dr. Shore's enthusiasm came through on many occasions. He would say that after all his years in the profession he still enjoys waking up to come to work," Hutson said.

Hutson was particularly interested in gaining experience in dermatology, dentistry, and radiology. "I was able to work with cases in all of my areas of interest," Hutson said. "I enjoyed being able to see so many cases and how the doctors at the clinic treated them." Hutson also appreciated learning about the business side of the clinic.

"Choose a clinic that is excited to have you come in as a preceptor," Hutson advises. "The best places have doctors who are happy to not only share what they know with you, but are also enthusiastic to learn from you."

John McCarty, also a fourth-year student at the CVM, valued the opportunity to learn various methods of doing things and to explore most areas of medicine during his preceptorship. Each clinician in the practice had an interest or area of strength, McCarty said. "Dr. Shore allowed me to help him with some surgeries. Dr. James Ryterski and Dr. Chandra Heider liked to talk about cases and quiz me a little about pathogenesis or differentials."

Some of the cases made a particular impact. "I remember seeing a cat with typical textbook clinical signs of uremia," McCarty said. "It was a really distinct image that I will never forget, and made me feel like I was really putting together the lecture end of school with the practical real life end of veterinary medicine."

McCarty's advice to those entering a preceptorship is to not fixate on one area. "At this point we need to really just get thrown into the mix, even if it is the seemingly easy stuff," he said. "Try drawing blood, doing a cysto', or take a history during these preceptorships. Let the clinic put you to work a bit."

Dr. Shore, a strong supporter of getting involved, told McCarty, "Whether it is in the community or volunteering or joining clubs, it is valuable to you in some way."

Shore first learned the value of community involvement during an unofficial preceptorship he served in a veterinary clinic during college. "One vet was very involved in the community," Shore said.

This involvement made an impression on Shore, and he has followed the same path. He is currently vice president of the Missouri Veterinary Medical Foundation and past president of the



Timothy Hutson



John McCarty

University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine Alumni Board. He has served as president of the Greater St. Louis Veterinary Medical Association and St. Louis District delegate to the Missouri Veterinary Medical Association.

Shore's preceptorship was his first exposure to the real world of general practice, where he saw that different veterinarians handle cases in different ways, and where he learned to treat various conditions and work with staff.

Today, Shore aims to offer preceptors experiences in various aspects of internal medicine and surgery, as well as practice management. Brentwood Animal Hospital also provides students a chance to see that private practices do things differently than a university clinic, and that veterinarians must discern when it's time to consider a referral.

Shore and his colleagues strive to offer individualized preceptorship experiences based on the student's areas of interest. But Shore also strongly encourages students, "Learn as much about things you don't think you are interested in. Be open minded."

Shore says he loves working with students and keeping in touch with them after they finish their preceptorship. "They are fun and energetic," Shore said. "The staff enjoys it, too. Sometimes things even get a little silly, with lots of laughter."

"The bottom line? We get as much out of it, if not more." Shore said. "Dr. Tennison is great and Mizzou has a great program."

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