



June 30, 2017

Dear Senior Students,

Congratulations on having completed the vast majority of your veterinary education! Many of you are probably starting to look for jobs, but some of you may be considering internship as the next best step in your professional development. For those of you completing your training in September or January, starting an internship would typically mean that you will have several months following graduation without employment. While this might be a welcome break, it is certainly a pause in the pursuit of your goals.

Ocean State Veterinary Specialists is a very busy emergency and referral practice in Rhode Island. We have had a successful internship program for 16 years. However, we repeatedly find that having our interns start their year in June is difficult – not only for the new graduates, but for those who need to supervise the interns during what is always the busiest time of the year. For the past three years we have started an internship program in January or February with Ross graduates who completed their degree in January. By July these interns have been quite competent and comfortable working in the emergency department, and have been an asset to our new graduates starting in June. So we are hoping to expand this program. We are inviting students who plan to complete their program this fall or winter to apply for internship at OSVS. We would expedite the review process such that the applicant could avoid going through the VIRMP program if they were accepted at OSVS. We will fill up to four positions for the February start date, and then fill our remaining positions through the standard VIRMP match process with a start date in June.

The internship is a 12 ½ month program, so would be completed sometime near March 1 of the following year. The program description is attached. Applications for the early start date should be submitted no later than September 15. Interviews and follow-up will then be done by mid-October, with commitment letters sent by the end of October. Any interested students should submit a Curriculum Vitae and Letter of Intent, as well as a copy of their most updated transcript, and three letters of recommendation from clinical faculty. Applications should be sent to Dr. Justine Johnson at jjohnson@osvs.net. We strongly encourage a visit – OSVS is, as I mentioned, a very busy place. It is a good idea for the applicant to see the hospital, and talk with multiple people who are in the internship program or ER service. Visits can be accommodated any time between now and October. If a visit is not possible, a Skype interview can be arranged. Interested students may also contact me for the email addresses of the current Ross graduates in our program. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Justine A. Johnson DVM, DACVECC

The Internship at Ocean State Veterinary Specialists

The internship at Ocean State Veterinary Specialists participates in the annual VIRMP match program. However, there are at least two positions open for Ross graduates who are graduating in the fall or winter, and able to start their program in February. This is a unique opportunity for Ross students, as other internship programs typically start in July.

The Facility:

Ocean State Veterinary Specialists is a 24-hour hospital providing emergency and specialty referral services to the state of Rhode Island as well as parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The hospital is approximately 26,000sf, including three surgery suites with advanced equipment for both soft tissue and orthopedic surgeries including laparoscopy equipment. Diagnostic equipment includes digital endoscopy, digital radiography and a high resolution ultrasound machine, a CT scanner, Fluoroscopy, and full time, on-site MRI. The fully-equipped intensive care unit includes oxygen cages, mechanical ventilator, telemetric electrocardiography, defibrillator, pulse oximetry, and blood pressure monitors. In house diagnostic equipment includes blood gas and electrolyte monitors, and CBC, chemistry and coagulation analyzers. Advanced therapeutics are available including transfusion products, parenteral nutrition, peritoneal dialysis, and radioactive iodine therapy.

The Staff:

The staff includes specialists in internal medicine, surgery, radiology, oncology, neurology, emergency/critical care, cardiology, ophthalmology, and avian/exotic medicine. There are two criticalists, and approximately twenty full-time, internship trained and experienced emergency doctors, who are a vital source of support for the interns, especially on nights and weekends. There are 2-3 residents in Emergency/Critical Care and one Surgery resident.

The support staff includes highly trained technicians, many of whom are certified. One technician is specialty certified in Emergency/Critical care, and several more are working towards their specialty certifications. The ICU technicians are capable of placing central catheters, performing advanced patient monitoring, trouble-shooting ventilator cases, etc.

The Internship:

The 12 1/2 month internship has an emphasis on emergency medicine and critical care. The intern will spend approximately 55% of his/her time on emergency or inpatient shifts. During these shifts the intern will have access to specialists and experienced emergency doctors for consultation. Extensive daily case rounds ensure that the intern has the opportunity to learn from each case he/she sees as well as cases being managed by other doctors. The intern will also spend time on surgery, internal medicine, and elective rotations in other specialties. In addition to case rounds, there are weekly didactic rounds for the interns presented by the various specialists. The intern is expected to participate in the teaching of technicians and visiting student externs. The internship is designed to expose the participant to the various specialties, allowing the intern to develop a special interest to pursue in a residency, but also providing a broad education in high quality medicine and surgery which will be valuable in any type of future practice. Previous interns have routinely expressed that they felt very well prepared for the jobs they went into because of their OSVS experience. The internship is designed to prepare doctors for residency, emergency work, and high quality private practices.

East Greenwich is in the middle of the state of Rhode Island on the west shore of Narragansett Bay. It is close to scenic Newport and coastal beaches, and approximately one hour from Boston. For further information please contact Dr. Justine Johnson at jjohnson@osvs.net.

The Details:

-Schedule: The interns rotate through an 8 week schedule, spending a week each in medicine, surgery, two weeks of elective time, and 4 weeks on varying emergency rotations. Elective rotations can include Ophthalmology, Radiology, Oncology, Neurology, Avian/Exotics and Cardiology. On elective weeks, the intern works 4 days with the specialists, and one weekend day of ER. When on emergency weeks, the intern may be on a primary receiving shift and seeing emergency cases, or may be on a mainly inpatient management shift working with patients that presented to the emergency service. The interns do work overnight shifts as part of the emergency rotations, but they are paired with an experienced emergency doctor.

The interns work 5 days a week, with a guaranteed 2 days off a week. These two days are not always together, and there is only one full weekend off 8 week period. On days off, the intern has no clinical responsibility, and need only come in if there is a pre-planned didactic event. The interns get two weeks of vacation, but must work two of the major holidays (i.e. Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Years) and most of the minor holidays.

The intern must be prepared to be in the hospital from 12 to 15 hours a day when on emergency weeks. This is typical. Pets cannot come to the hospital during normal shifts, so necessary arrangements should be made for them.

-Primary Case Management Responsibility: Interns are expected to function as doctors from the first day after orientation. They are the primary doctor on their cases, and handle all of the client communications, medical record keeping, etc. They are able to seek advice and support from numerous sources, but ultimately the decisions on their cases are theirs. Students anticipating applying for this internship should take full advantage of their clinical year of veterinary school to “practice” being a doctor so they are ready.

-Skills: The typical intern will have had the opportunity to gain most of the skills needed to be able to practice general medicine or emergency medicine, and have a strong foundation to prepare them to be residents in any discipline. Sample skills include:

Emergency: Patient stabilization (shock, trauma, etc.)
Intubation
IV catheter placement
Thoracentesis, abdominocentesis, cystocentesis
Wound management and other common minor procedures
Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
Emergency “FAST” ultrasound

Medicine: Bone marrow aspirate/biopsy
Cerebrospinal fluid tap
Joint tap
Tracheal wash
Basic endoscopic exam and biopsies
Basic ultrasound skills

Surgery: Tissue handling and basic approaches
Common soft tissue elective surgeries (spay/neuter, cystotomy, splenectomy, etc.)
Common emergency surgeries (GDV, enterotomy, pyometra, dystocia, etc.)
-skill level will depend on intern’s case exposure and interest

****Images of the hospital can be seen at our website: www.osvs.com ****