For the first time, the CSN Veterinary Technician students assist in surgery on campus

For the past six years, Dr. Dennis Olsen, director of the CSN Veterinary Technician Program, has taken his students to veterinary clinics or a temporary lab space near McCarran International Airport to learn to assist in surgeries.

The program moved to the West Charleston campus last year and is now housed in the Donald Stone Building. This summer, Dr. Olsen and his recently graduated students conducted a heart surgery on 6-month-old Samantha, a Tibetan spaniel, who had been rescued from euthanasia by a former student. The dog suffered from a congenital heart defect known as patent ductus arteriosus. The vessel is a connection between sides of the heart that normally closes at birth.

“This is the first major surgery we’ve done here,” Olsen said, “My students were able to place their fingers on the heart prior to surgery to feel the heart murmur and then following the successful procedure, feel the repaired heart to understand the difference. The experience is a powerful teaching tool.”

The puppy stayed with CSN student Aubree Engert, who graduated this spring, until Samantha was ready for the two-hour surgery. Engert and several of her peers, who also graduated in May, came back to campus during the summer for the opportunity to assist in the operation.

Thank You

The College of Southern Nevada Foundation’s Legacy of Achievement Gala produced much needed support for the Vet Tech Program:

Thanks to the generosity of The Eleanor Nagy Foundation, two CSN Vet Tech students will receive scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Thank you to Selma Bartlett and Frank Martin. Selma purchased a West Highland Terrier and Frank bought a Shetland at CSN’s 2009 Legacy Gala Auction. Proceeds from sale of the dogs were designated to underwrite Vet Tech Program expenses.

Dreams

The Vet Tech Program has a dream to increase teaching space to accommodate more students and to create a larger state of the art surgical theater.

The faculty would like to upgrade the program to include broadcast, and audio visual equipment to allow students in rural Nevada to observe and participate in teaching labs.

The program is also interested in acquiring a digital dental X-ray machine for feline and canine dental care.
Olsen’s students were busy as they prepped Samantha for surgery, including administering the appropriate amount of sedation, which was quite a task with Samantha, who has been dubbed by the graduates as “Land Shark” for the rather independent attitude she exhibits when she does not get her way. They then assisted Dr. Olsen throughout the two-hour surgical procedure, helping to stitch her up and wrap her carefully in bandages.

Samantha has since recovered. Her stitches have come out and Engler is helping to find Samantha a new home. Additional teaching surgeries are scheduled for later this month.

A licensed veterinary technician’s duties are those of a veterinary nurse, nurse-anesthetist, operating room technician, dental hygienist, medical laboratory technician, and radiology technician. The Associate Degree program is fully accredited by the AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association). This program is the first fully accredited program in the State. It is 4 semesters and includes didactic lectures, hands on laboratories, and hands on clinical assignments in the new CSN Veterinary Clinic. The students are also instructed by renowned veterinarians from around the country as they participate in clinical rotations. Graduates of the program have credentials that are recognized Nationwide and even in some other countries. A graduate of this program may sit for the National Veterinary Technology Exam and Nevada Veterinary Technology Exam. Upon passing both exams they may become a registered veterinary technician and be licensed in Nevada.

To: Eugene L. Kirshbaum Foundation,

I was recently informed that I was awarded a scholarship for Veterinary Technology from the Eugene L. Kirshbaum Foundation. I would like to take a moment of your time to express my heartfelt thanks for this honor.

Growing up I always new I wanted to work with animals, and they have always been a part of my life. I was the kid that wanted to take in every stray animal in the neighborhood. Any animal that needed care I wanted to be the person that could help them. After moving here from Michigan four years ago, I was excited to hear about the program offered at the College of Southern Nevada. Being accepted to this prestigious program has changed my life. I am proud to say I not only learn the how to, but also the why. Education is essential in this field, and graduates from this program will stand out as being exceptional in their career. I will complete the program in the spring of 2009, and have decided to continue my education and continue my studies in Veterinary Medicine. Thanks to the scholarship provided by your foundation my life-long goal of caring for animals has become a reality.

Again, I would like to send my sincerest thank you to the Eugene L. Kirshbaum Foundation. Thanks to organizations such as yours, I have the ability to pursue my dreams as will others for years to come. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jennifer L. Carlin

Career fields for a licensed veterinary technician may include:

- Private animal clinical practice (small, mixed, or large animals)
- Specialty practice
- Zoological Medicine
- Production Animal Medicine
- Government
- Veterinary Industry/Sales
- Wildlife
- Military
- Research
- Education

For more information about the Veterinary Nursing program contact Dr. Dennis Olsen at dennis.olsen@csn.edu

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