

**College of Natural Science and Mathematics**  
Department of Veterinary Medicine

**UAF Externship Opportunities 2023-2024**

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is offering veterinary medicine externships for matriculating veterinary students from other colleges (in their final or next to final clinical year). Students may work in conjunction with local (Fairbanks, Alaska) Alaska state agencies, the lead veterinarian of the Yukon Quest, rural veterinarians, state agencies and veterinary research faculty at UAF.

Through this program, students will be exposed to the unique aspects of veterinary medicine in Alaska. From modern clinics with new equipment (digital x-ray, ultrasound, endoscopy, etc.), to spay and neuter opportunities in rural communities (off the road system), these externships promise to be valuable to any student thinking of practicing in Alaska, or students who want a unique cultural experience.

In order to participate, you must recognize that Alaska is remote, specialists are not often available, and particularly in the bush, incomes are low and the standard of care may be lower than what you have experienced in a referral institution.

Visits are limited to six weeks (with no more than four weeks on one service). Requests for extension will be determined on a case by case basis. Demonstrated competence and proficiency in both spoken and written English language skills are required to facilitate the educational process and client communications.

We are accepting applications from veterinary students to participate in this program. The veterinarian in charge of the specific externship experience that students apply for will make final selections. Students from all tracks are encouraged to apply. Please attach your current curriculum vitae or resume and a one-page essay describing your interest in the program, how it will benefit you and describe what skills and perspective you can bring to Alaska. All students must provide two references from current mentors or faculty. Applications must be submitted to [uaf-vet-med@alaska.edu](mailto:uaf-vet-med@alaska.edu). Colorado students send your application to Debbie Liptak at [dliptak@colostate.edu](mailto:dliptak@colostate.edu) and copy [uaf-vet-med@alaska.edu](mailto:uaf-vet-med@alaska.edu).

To be accepted, students must have written approval from their home University and two letters of reference from faculty in their department.

**Sled Dog Externships** – offered both in Alaska and the lower 48 (Wyoming)

*Application Deadline for Dog Sled Externships: July 31, 2023 – selections completed  
September  
2023*

**Alaskan sled dog races (CB300 and YQA 550)**

Both of these races take place in the middle of the Alaskan winter. It can get **very cold**. Temperatures of -**40° F are common, temperatures of -50° to -60°** are not unheard of. You will be expected to work **outside** in these temperatures, **day or night**. The CB300 and YQA run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until all teams have finished. The veterinary teams live out of suitcases for the entirety of the race and are

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prepared to move at a moments notice. Be prepared to go several days without indoor plumbing, a warm bed, or a shower. There are checkpoints where you will be sleeping on the floor of a gymnasium, in a running car, an Arctic oven tent, or in the cab of a fire truck. The ability to work well in a small team while sleep deprived is a must!

**Copper Basin 300 Sled Dog Race** ([www.cb300.com](http://www.cb300.com)) - Up to 2 students working with the Veterinarian in Charge (Dr. Cristina “Nina” Hansen DVM PhD) and with trail veterinarians.

- Week 1 - January 8, 2024, Orientation and training, drive to Glennallen (1/11/24), pre-race vet checks (1/12)
- Week 2 - January 13, 2024 -> Race begins! Race finishes 1/15-16. Finish banquet evening of 1/16. Drive back to Fairbanks 1/17.

**Yukon Quest 550 Alaska** ([www.yukonquestalaska.com](http://www.yukonquestalaska.com)) – Up to 2 students working with the Veterinarian in Charge (Dr. Cristina “Nina” Hansen DVM PhD) and trail veterinarians.

- Week 1 – January 29, 2024 Orientation and training, pre-race meetings, pre-race vet checks
- Week 2 – February 3, 2024 -> Race begins in Fairbanks! Races finish 2/4 – 2/10. Finish banquet 2/10 or 2/11.

**Lower 48 race (Wyoming Stage Stop)**

The Wyoming Stage Stop Sled Dog Race is the largest annual sled dog race in the lower 48 states. The race is a Stage Stop format much like the Tour de France. The race starts in Jackson, Wyoming and makes stops in several Wyoming communities and finishes in Driggs, Idaho. There are 8 daily stage races of 30-35 miles in length over 9 days and the fastest teams average 18 miles/hour. Musher may choose up to 10 of a 14-dog pool to run each stage. This is a fast-paced sled dog race. Race veterinarians are skilled in orthopedic palpation and are required to have advanced sports medicine training.

**Wyoming Stage Stop sled dog race** (<https://www.wyomingstagestop.org/>) - Up to 2 students working with lead veterinarian (Dr. Veronica Devall DVM DACVSMR) and 3 other seasoned race veterinarians for the duration of the race.

- Week 1 – January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024 Orientation and training, pre-race vet checks (1/26), ceremonial start
- Week 2 – January 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 – Stage races begin at scheduled sites. Race ends 2/4. Finish banquet evening of 2/4.

**Small Animal practice externship**

**Aurora Animal Clinic, Dr. Barbara Cole DVM, CCRP:** Caring and compassionate fullservice small animal practice with emphasis on rehabilitation and sports medicine. Available for up to 2 externs during a 4-week period during the summer of 2023 and throughout the school year. Students will get exposure to various aspects of animal private practice including diagnostic imaging, general and orthopedic surgeries, internal medicine cases, wellness exams, rehabilitation, chemotherapy, etc. This is a busy clinic that works with Veterinary Medicine at UAF. Any questions about this rotation should be directed to [bcole@auroraanimal.com](mailto:bcole@auroraanimal.com).

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**Marine Mammal externship**

**Dr. Hollmen's laboratory at the Alaska SeaLife Center:** This opportunity will occur in Seward, Alaska, a world-class marine animal research and rehabilitation facility. The extern will learn about research centering on the One Health concept by participating in projects relating marine animal health and conservation in the Arctic, in the context of ecosystem health. Student opportunities involve laboratory research using physiological, molecular and biochemical methods, animal health, and may involve an opportunity to participate in field investigations on marine ecology and disease epidemiology.

**Chena Veterinary Clinic, Dr. Renee Rember, DVM, MS** Chena Veterinary Clinic in downtown Fairbanks, Alaska is a small intimate clinic seeing mainly small animals as well as exotics and some small ruminants. Accepting one 4th year student at a time for 2- 4 week rotations year round. This is a small clinic that focuses on building strong client relationships and providing exceptional care. Radiographs, MRI through UAF, ultrasound, ECG, laser treatment, full surgery suite, and dental radiograph capabilities. Great opportunity for hands on learning, surgery experience, ICU, walk in emergencies, at home euthanasia, and more. We see many wellness exams, internal medicine cases, dentals, spays/neuters, and sled dog kennel health. Follow cases from start to finish and work on building your diagnostic skills, client communication skills, and overall small practice management.