Training Hawai’i’s First Para-Professionals

Veterinary Technology is among the five fastest-growing career fields in the nation. ‘Vet Techs’ perform vital tasks from assisting with physical exams to surgical assistance, from performing dental cleanings to conducting diagnostic laboratory tests. Hawai’i’s Veterinarians are seeking trained professionals to do the job, and Windward Community College is now providing the training. Vet Techs are desperately wanted at animal shelters, lab animal facilities, and private veterinary practice (there are over 80 veterinary clinics in Hawai’i).

The new AS degree in Veterinary Technology

Since its creation in 2008, the Vet Assisting program has become a tremendous success, placing more than 70 percent of graduates in the veterinary industry. Building on the success of the Veterinary Assisting Certificate of Achievement, WCC is inaugurating its two-year Associate in Science degree in Veterinary Technology. Not only will this program provide additional training and real-world skills, but students will be able to obtain industry-recognized credentials, which will enable graduates to obtain reliable employment anywhere in the U.S. or Canada.

What Students Say About the Vet Tech Program

“Since I was not willing to relocate to the continental U.S., I set my dreams of a career in the Veterinary field aside... until I found Windward Community College’s Veterinary Assisting program. It has provided me with the knowledge and hands-on experience to prepare myself for the physical and emotional demands required of this profession. As a student of the program who is now employed at a veterinary facility, I can relate many experiences at work to what I have learned and practiced in class. Many of the techniques introduced in the Laboratory procedures course are used for diagnostics in veterinary facilities. Although I won’t be able to become a Veterinarian without relocating, the program has made me realize that I enjoy performing laboratory tests the most.

The program is demanding and requires an tremendous amount of commitment to studying. However, I feel that is what makes the program a highly valuable stepping stone to a career in the veterinary field. Thanks to this program I have the confidence and knowledge that I can succeed if I choose to continue my education and seek the Associate in Science degree in Veterinary Technology.”

—Stacy M. Sonan, WCC Vet Assisting graduate
The WCC Veterinary Assisting and Veterinary Technician programs are the ONLY college-level training programs for veterinary para-professionals in the Pacific. These programs combine traditional classroom instruction with intensive hands-on laboratory and practical skills instruction under the supervision of credentialed instructors:

- Veterinary Anatomy & Physiology
- Veterinary Office and Business Procedures
- Diagnostic Laboratory Techniques
- Animal Restraint and Exam Skills
- Companion Animal Nursing
- Clinical Calculations
- Companion Animal Diseases and Nutrition

**Culminating Experience:** The key to success for WCC’s veterinary technician training program is the clinical internship class. During the final year of the program, students intern at two of 20 participating preceptor clinics, lab animal facilities, and animal shelters. Not only does this allow students to practice and perfect their skills in a real-world setting, but also serves as a bridge to certification and future employment.

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<tr>
<th>The Vet Assisting &amp; Vet Tech AS Programs Need Your Commitment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Costs Over 2 Years</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Tuition</td>
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<td>Books</td>
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<td>Laboratory Supplies</td>
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<td>Exam Fees</td>
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<td><strong>Total Costs Per Student</strong></td>
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In addition to the costs above, WCC needs funding to purchase equipment and renovate facilities to meet American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accreditation standards.

“Our job is to prepare students for future employment while listening to industry needs. The Vet Tech program is a perfect example of responding to the call for trained assistants while providing job opportunities for students. We can’t be more proud of the program and hope to offer the program at our sister community colleges.”

—Doug Dykstra, Chancellor, Windward Community College

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Photos top to bottom:
1. Sam Craddock, Vet Tech Instructor, interim program director
2. Learning proper restraining techniques
3. Studying the antibiotic effects on diseased cells
4. Titan
5. Assisting in surgery practices