Snyder native begins externship for Veterinary Technology Program

Residents of Altus, Oklahoma will be seeing a new face around town. Cara Calvert from Snyder, a student in Murray State College’s Veterinary Technology Program, has started her externship at All Pets Medical Center. The externship is an 8 week-long program that is designed to give students real-world experience before they head out into the workforce. It is also a requirement for graduation from the program.

“Clinical externship is the culmination of a student’s Veterinary Technician education,” says Debbie Reed, Registered Veterinary Technician and Co-Director of the Murray State College Veterinary Technology Program. “It is the training ground where students are challenged to integrate all aspects of their education. This phase of training offers students the excitement and responsibility of applying the knowledge and skills they have learned.”

Under the guidance of Dr. Kenneth O’Hanlon and his staff, Calvert is getting hands on training in the care and handling of animals. She says that working at a clinic that is close to home has been an advantage.

“The staff is so much fun to work with and really helpful,” says Calvert. “So far, it has been a lot of fun and full of new experiences. They have been teaching me some tricks of the trade to make things a little easier. Most of these things come from the experience they have had in this field.”

Calvert says the support from her family, especially her mother Caren Calvert, has been essential to her completing her degree. She also credits her grandmother, Mary Schwartz, and her brothers, sisters-in-law, and nieces and nephews as a big part of her support system.

“Growing up, I always knew I wanted to do something with animals,” she says. “In fact, I was raised around animals my whole life; so understanding them and taking care of them is like second nature to me. After high school, I decided I was going to try out the veterinary medical field, so I worked at a nearby veterinarian for almost two years and that solidified what I want to do with my life. When I got accepted to Murray State it was like a dream came true and everything worked out perfectly.”

Calvert also credits her instructors at Murray State College as big factors in her journey to her new career. She says the lessons she learned at MSC went beyond the technical skills such as drawing blood, running laboratory tests and talking to clients.

“The personal lessons that they have taught me are the things that are going to help me succeed,” says Calvert. “They taught me how to love my career choice through the good and bad and more importantly, how to believe in myself. Without these things I would have never made it as far as I have. I can’t say enough good things about my instructors. They are hands down the best in the business.”

As far as her future, Calvert will be working at the All Pets Medical Center until July 11. She says she plans on returning to school to complete a bachelor’s degree in animal science.

“I haven’t quite decided yet but I’m thinking about being a Veterinary Technology teacher at some point in the distant future,” she says. “Right now, I'm just ready to find a good job where I feel at home, and start putting all of my skills to work. At this point, I'm ready for any new adventure that comes my way!”

For more on the Murray State College Veterinary Technology Program, visit www.mscok.edu.