Practicum in Large Animal Health (Specifically Equine)

Haley Cardis; Mentor Dr. Jutta Heller

Abstract

My long-term goal is to become an equine veterinarian. The motivation for this stems from growing up on a farm with 14 horses. In 2020, I was given the opportunity to intern with veterinarian Doctor Gillet at Wildflower Large Animal Veterinarian clinic. The clinic has a hospital in Graham and also a mobile truck for farm calls. The Wildflower clinic specializes in radiology and ultrasound, equine lameness, equine dentistry, equine nutrition, health and wellness and laser therapy. Doctor Gillette also gives educational seminars to inform people of their responsibilities as an animal owner including dentistry, first aid, and nutrition. My goals were to learn as many things about being a large animal vet, especially skills that I can apply to the care of my own horses. I learned about the anatomy of the horse’s leg as there are many leg wounds in this practice. I learned about the horse’s teeth, how they work, different medications prescribed and administered to horses, mules, donkeys, and cows under certain circumstances. Different circumstances could include but are not limited to: sedation for various reasons, drugs administered for a horse colic due to overeating/other various reasons, lidocaine to numb a wound or castrate a young stallion/bull. I personally administered vaccines to horses and cows, sedated horses intravenously, checked cows for pregnancy, and did four dentistry floats with the help of Dr Gillette. When floating a horse's teeth, you are removing the sharp points on their teeth with a diamond plated drill in order for a horse to eat healthily. Upon reflecting on my experience, I now know how to properly take care of my own horses. The amazing experience with Dr. Gillette in the Wildflower clinic sets me up for success in veterinary school, and I am grateful for this opportunity.