



Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Living the oath

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Dr. Jordyn Boesch '06 recently joined Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine, adding expertise and capacity to the Hospital's Anesthesia service and talent and ambition to the College's research program.

Anesthesiologists serve the needs of some of the sickest patients at the Hospital, administer to all species, and support specialty areas that range from surgery and internal medicine to cardiology and neurology. This versatility is one of the features that attracted Boesch to the specialty. Her experiences through the Expanding Horizons study abroad program while a veterinary student at Cornell confirmed her desire to further the profession's understanding of anesthesia's effects on wildlife through evidence-based investigation.

"We have so many questions surrounding wildlife anesthesia," said Boesch, explaining that some animals are not able to get enough oxygen into the bloodstream while anesthetized and others do not breathe deeply or frequently enough. "While I was at the Cheetah Conservation Fund's clinic in Namibia, I was exposed for the first time to some of the challenges of wildlife anesthesia. Our findings will hopefully improve the safety of anesthesia of wild animals that is done in the field as well as in state-of-the-art facilities like Cornell's."

At Cornell, Boesch will leverage the most up-to-date thinking on pain management techniques to ease suffering in all species. Noting that physical cues are often the only way she can tell that her patients are in pain, Boesch is committed to getting to know her patients as good as possible.

"Sometimes it's obvious," said Boesch, who plans to conduct research in pain relief that will be useful for Hospital patients as well as zoo animals, production animals, and wildlife. "An animal might display fairly obvious signs of pain, such as not putting weight on a limb or yipping in pain, or might display only display very subtle signs of pain. Sometimes we have to rely on observation skills of the owner or our own observation skills after spending time with the patient. It's a process, but one that we have to complete quickly so that that animal hurts for as short a period as possible. We all pledged to relieve suffering when we took the Veterinarian's Oath. It's an honor to be able to live that promise every day."

After graduating from Cornell, the Massachusetts native completed a small animal and exotics internship at a private practice in Ohio and then returned to Cornell for additional residency training in anesthesiology. With the three-year residency under her white coat, Boesch was hired as an assistant clinical professor at the University of Illinois' College of Veterinary Medicine where she worked until rejoining the Cornell community this past November.



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“I’ve always wanted to be at Cornell,” said Boesch. “In many ways, I believe the standard of care is set here, and I want to be a part of that.”

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