

## **A Week in the Life of a Vet: Boiler Vet Camp Explores the Profession**

If your child has an interest in caring for animals, performs well in science classes, and relates well to others, they may find veterinary medicine to be a rewarding and fulfilling career choice. To ensure a good fit, consider enrolling your child in a veterinary camp to give them a firsthand look into the profession of animal healthcare. █

Located at the Purdue School of Veterinary Medicine in Indiana, the Boiler Vet Camp is one of the nation's most reputable programs for aspiring veterinarians. Intended to give campers a better understanding and appreciation of the day-to-day activities performed by veterinarians and veterinary technicians, it's distinguished by its fast pace, hands-on curriculum, and diversity in the range of lessons and topics that are presented.

Dr. Jim Weisman, Assistant Director and Clinical Assistant Professor for the Purdue School of Veterinary Medicine, manages the operations of the Boiler Vet Camp. He sees the program as an essential tool in guiding students toward a fulfilling and thriving career in veterinary healthcare.

“When a student decides to become a veterinarian or a veterinary technician, they have many options in the actual role they can play in the profession,” Dr. Weisman explains. “Our camp gives them a chance to see the many disciplines of the profession, from clinical medicine and surgery to research, pharmaceutical development, food animal medicine, and public health.”

What sets Boiler Vet Camp apart from other student vet programs? Dr. Weisman feels it's the highly interactive and diverse nature of the curriculum. During the seven-day session, students have the opportunity to take part in dozens of specialized lessons. “The campers greatly enjoy the hands-on activities,” Dr. Weisman says. He points out that several notable favorites include the dissection of real hearts from several different species, as well as the opportunity to work with cows, horses, and pigs “behind the scenes” at several off-campus facilities. During the program, the students have the opportunity to visit Purdue Swine Farm, Wolf Park, Indianapolis Zoo, and Fair Oaks, one of Indiana's largest dairy farms.

As the capstone project for each session, campers participate in a simulated medical case from start to finish. During the case, the students work alongside a faculty member from the Veterinary School who serves as their mentor. The results and findings of each case study are then presented to a panel of fellow students and parents.

The Boiler Vet Camp holds its annual session each summer, typically during the second week in June, in the university's veterinary school. During the comprehensive week-long program, most of the campers choose to stay on-campus in one of the residence halls.

Students must be at least 12 years of age and entering 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade to be considered as one of the 50 who are admitted each year. All courses at the Boiler Vet Camp are led by

licensed veterinarians or veterinary technicians. A limited number of scholarships are awarded to students based on the family's economic status.

What advice does Dr. Weisman have for parents whose children have expressed an interest in bettering the lives of animals through veterinary medicine? "Parents should instill into these students the personal characteristics of self-motivation, time management, honesty, integrity, and a 'never give up' attitude," he says. Above all, Dr. Weisman notes that the educational pathway to becoming a veterinarian is a long and rigorous one, but—with the right training and encouragement—it can lead to a stable and rewarding profession.

The Boiler Vet Camp provides a rare opportunity for your child to get firsthand insights and hands-on experience in the veterinary field. For more information on the program, e-mail [boilervetcamp@purdue.edu](mailto:boilervetcamp@purdue.edu) or call (765) 494-7893.