



## Information and Application Instructions for the Cheetah Conservation Veterinary Internship

**Opportunity:** Students enrolled at the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine are invited to apply for an internship to study at the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) Research and Education Centre in Namibia. This internship provides the opportunity to work under the supervision of renowned Dr. Laurie Marker\*, CCF Founder and Executive Director, for eight (8) weeks during the months of June – August 2021. The internship is sponsored by the CCF and funded in part by a UC Davis alumna who believes in the importance of conservation and saving the cheetah population in the wild for future generations. After visiting CCF in Namibia, it became her mission to create the possibility for students from her alma mater to have an opportunity to train in such a prestigious learning environment.

**Award:** The \$5,000 scholarship is intended to cover costs of housing in the student dorms (sharing with other international and Namibian students), meals, project administrative costs and visa fee plus a \$500 stipend for the period of the internship. Travel expenses for airfare and ground transportation are not covered but scheduling would be coordinated with the CCF. SVM students are encouraged to apply for the International Summer Externship funding (**submission deadline: midnight February 10, 2021**).

**Travel Restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic:** At the present time we do not know if UC Davis will restrict international travel for students next summer. If travel to Namibia is restricted for June-August 2021, the CCF has agreed to allow students who are selected for this internship to defer the opportunity for a one year period to the summer of 2022. This would be applicable for 1<sup>st</sup> year student applicants. Extensions beyond that period (e.g for 2<sup>nd</sup> year student applicants to apply as senior externships) is not guaranteed.

**Introduction:** This internship opportunity is specifically designed to offer a unique learning experience in a field conservation setting that includes working in CCF's community-based programs with rural farmers, working with domestic animals, farm animals and wildlife. The intern awarded will have the opportunity to work with goats, and horses from the CCF model farm, Livestock Guarding Dogs, captive cheetahs and cheetahs in the wild. Interns are required to be tremendously flexible, adaptable and patient. This internship is hard work but offers the kind of experience that will have a lasting positive impact.



The Cheetah Conservation Fund was founded in 1990, and is the global leader in research, education and conservation of cheetahs. The CCF Centre is located in Otjiwarongo, Namibia about three hours north of the capital city of Windhoek. CCF's International Research and Education Centre is a renowned research facility that sets the standard for researchers and students worldwide seeking to learn more about the cheetah. CCF is also an ecotourism destination, providing information and memorable experiences.

The CCF International Research and Education Centre includes a research facility; a veterinary clinic and laboratories; a visitor center; lecture hall; an interactive education center and museum, and an overnight camping facility accommodating Namibian and international groups participating in CCF programs. CCF also maintains a cheetah sanctuary to care for orphan and injured cheetahs; a 46,353-hectare integrated Model Farm and Wildlife Reserve, a goat creamery for training agricultural workers; and a 4,000-hectare wildlife holding area, the Bellebena Game Camp, used for soft-releasing cheetahs before re-introducing them to the wild. In addition, CCF is the only conservation organization to house a fully equipped genetics laboratory and a Genome Resource Bank on site. CCF holds the world's largest wild cheetah database of biological material.

(Please see [www.cheetah.org](http://www.cheetah.org))

**Eligibility:** Any first or second year DVM student who is currently enrolled in the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) is invited to apply for the scholarship. Students are required to be in good academic standing and must not have any "Y" grades. First- and second-year DVM students in the UC Davis SVM must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 at the time of the committee's review of applications (generally late February) to be considered further. UC Davis SVM Global Programs Office will review all applications and make recommendations for candidate interviews with Dr. Marker and the donor, who will make the final selection for the internship. These phone interviews will be conducted in February/March 2021. UC Davis SVM Faculty Advisors will be Dr. Patricia Conrad and Paulina Crook.

**Timeline for Submission:** After completing the application form, applicants should send a single email with their completed application form in PDF attachment addressed to Carolyn Forlee at [cforlee@ucdavis.edu](mailto:cforlee@ucdavis.edu) by **midnight on February 10, 2021**. See application instructions below for more detail. Communication of decision will be announced by Spring Break 2021.

**Program Objectives:** The Cheetah Conservation Veterinary Scholarship recipient will travel to Namibia to participate in a career development opportunity for global conservation with a focus on cheetahs. Veterinary interns at CCF are required to complete a variety of veterinary and conservation related tasks in addition to being involved in the daily routines that keep the center operating effectively. In addition to cheetahs, there are many other animals that play a role in cheetah conservation; therefore, veterinary interns will gain experience by participating in the various tasks necessary to care for both domestic and wild animals:

- Provide medical care (preventative and treatment based) and perform post-mortem examinations to animals at CCF's field headquarters in Namibia, including farm animals (cattle, goats, sheep and horses), livestock guarding dogs, captive cheetahs and any injured wildlife.
- Learn about husbandry needs of animals at CCF's field quarters and assist as needed on a daily basis.
- Maintain medical health records for all animals.
- Participate in captive and wildlife health research of ongoing projects as needed.

- Participate in CCF's Future Farmers of Africa training programs in the surrounding eastern communal rural areas as needed. This outreach includes herd management education and limited point-of-care medical treatment of any sick homestead animals.
- Assist the Veterinary clinic team in domestic and wildlife chemical immobilizations as well as biological sample collection and sample processing. Immobilizations may be required for veterinary procedures or VHF/satellite collaring and translocations.

### **Internship Requirements:**

- Students are expected to commit a full-time effort to their project for at least 8 weeks of the summer during which other activities the student may engage in cannot conflict or otherwise interfere with the ability of the student to participate full-time in their internship activities.
- Awarded recipient must complete a CCF internship application (located at [cheetah.org](http://cheetah.org)) and register their trip with the CCF Intern Coordinator by email at [ccfinfo@iwayna](mailto:ccfinfo@iwayna) within two weeks of notice of award to schedule travel dates and complete all necessary documents.
- For the 2021 program the UC Davis faculty mentors for the internship will be Drs. Patricia Conrad and Paulina Crook.
- Develop a question with CCF staff that is explored and answered during their internship at CCF. The question should be something that is of interest to the intern, applies to the intern's studies at UC Davis SVM and is pertinent to CCF. The question should be related to the projects that the intern is working on during their time at CCF. The question should be resolved through literature review, analysis of clinical records, interviews, and/or hands-on investigations.

Most topics will require compiling and summarizing relevant literature prior to the internship. Most projects are based on preventative health, literature search, and file evaluation. Genetic projects are an option for students with prior laboratory experience.

#### **Potential questions could be based on the following studies:**

- Estimate numbers of owner kept and stray dogs living in communal areas.
  - Assess health and vaccination status of dogs and livestock in communal areas (observation, parasitology survey, physical examinations, blood work).
  - Participate in spay and vaccination campaign for domestic dogs in communal areas.
  - Parasitological survey of captive cheetahs.
  - Effect of vaccination on African wild dogs.
  - Babesia incidence in captive cheetahs.
  - Case studies using clinical records.
  - Analysis of anesthesia records.
  - Assessment of sanitary conditions of dairy and slaughter facility.
  - Analysis of milk composition.
  - Assessment of markers of kidney health using banked blood samples.
- Develop a visual presentation summarizing their time at CCF. The presentation should be in PowerPoint format and the PPT file should be completed and submitted to the intern supervisor at CCF before departing. The presentation will be shared with the CCF Team, the Scholarship Donor and the UC Davis Global Programs team. The elements of the presentation should include:
    - Introduction of CCF to viewers

- Overview of your experience at CCF including programs and tasks you were involved in
- Inquiry question, answer to question including methods used to answer the question
- Favorite experiences during your internship
- Most memorable moments of your experience
- Award recipients must agree to report on the activities conducted during the summer of their internship by submission of a 1-page report with 5 high-quality photos and a 2-3 min video. The report, photos and video will be posted on the Office for Global Programs website and used to promote this fellowship and the SVM students' global programs. Fellowship recipients will be required to give a 2 min oral presentation to accompany the video at a special evening hosted by the Office for Global Programs to inform and encourage other SVM students who might be interested in international opportunities and potential faculty mentors. The video is due September 13, 2021 and the report is due no later than October 4, 2021. Video and report with photos should be sent to Carolyn Forlee at [cforlee@ucdavis.edu](mailto:cforlee@ucdavis.edu)
- Complete a two-paragraph intern blog about your time at CCF that can be used on CCF's website and social media sites to provide an overview and better understanding of what interns can expect. (Please see <https://cheetah.org/news-blog/by-category/intern-stories/>). The blog should include photos and the following information:
  - University name (UC Davis SVM) and year of study
  - Country of origin
  - Main project and other tasks at CCF
  - Information about traveling in Namibia during your stay
  - Experiences and highlights of internship while at CCF

For additional information about the Cheetah Conservation Fund please visit the website at [cheetah.org](http://cheetah.org). For questions regarding this scholarship opportunity please contact JJ Muehlhausen at [jj@cheetah.org](mailto:jj@cheetah.org)

**Useful links for more information:**

- <https://cheetah.org/intern-story/>
- <https://cheetah.org/ccf-blog/>

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