

Connecting People to Their Community

CORONA: Hart Ranch provides learning experience

Veterinary technology students recently participated in a hands-on lab at Corona's Hart Ranch.



Kristen Duggan, center, a veterinary technology student at Carrington College in Pomona, calms a horse as classmates Ashley Bush, left, Samantha Hayes, and Western University of Health Sciences instructor Spring Halland, right, prepare to x-ray its leg Sept. 4 at Hart Ranch in Corona.

BY JOHN M. BLODGETT / CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Sept. 9, 2015

JOHN M. BLODGETT, CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Horses from the Hart Ranch in Corona have performed in the Olympics, appeared in movies and played polo. Now they help Carrington College students earn degrees.

About 20 veterinary technology majors from the college's Pomona campus gathered at the ranch on Sept. 4 for a hands-on lab. They learned how to walk a horse, lift its feet, draw its blood, x-ray its leg, take its temperature and more.

The lab occurs about every 10 weeks, said program director Susan Funston.

Samantha Hayes, 25, of Perris, said they prepared for the lab

with three weeks of classroom instruction.

They learned how horses react to various stimuli and how to apply a wrap, among other topics.

Coming from a family of horse lovers, Hayes is no stranger to the animal. Yet still she found the lab thrilling.

"You see horses in a new light when you approach them from (a clinical) standpoint," she said. "You interact on a deeper level," she added, reading a horse's feelings or anticipating how it might act.

For example, Hayes learned a horse is more rambunctious than usual when in pain, such as when blood is drawn.

Instructors cautioned students to beware the animals' hindquarters to prevent being kicked. Such diligence is as much for the horses' safety as the students', said Kristen Duggan, 22, of Moreno Valley.

"I learned that with big animals you always need to have a sense of caution and to be a multitasker," she said. "You need to know how to complete your task while keeping a constant eye on the horse."



Jaclyn Smith, left, a veterinary technology instructor at Carrington College in Pomona, and student Kristen Duggan steady a horse while practicing bandage-wrapping Sept. 4 at Hart Ranch in Corona.



Susan Funston, left, veterinary technology program director at Carrington College in Pomona, shows student Kristen Duggan how to draw a horse's blood Sept. 4 at Hart Ranch in Corona.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that jobs as veterinary technologists will increase by 30 percent, between 2012 and 2022.

Funston attributes this growth to people spending more on health care for the animals they treat as family and veterinarians hiring more licensed, rather than unlicensed, staff members.

Upon graduation, veterinarian technologists can find various jobs assisting veterinarians.

"One of the reasons I picked this career path is the options it gives you," said Hayes, who graduates in April. "I can work in the field with veterinarians and researchers or I can work in a hospital."

Her immediate goal is to find a job at a small-animal practice that rehabilitates wild animals.



Susan Funston, center, veterinary technology program director at Carrington College in Pomona, steadies a horse while student Ashley Bush bandages its tail Sept. 4. at Hart Ranch in Corona.



Samantha Hayes of Perris checks a horse's temperature Sept. 4 at Hart Ranch in Corona.

<http://www.pe.com/articles/horse-779708-lab-animals.html>