



Veterinary Internship Alumni

The Mystic Aquarium Veterinary Internship Alumni have gone on to have highly successful careers in aquatic animal medicine and are leaders in animal health, conservation, and research.

Laura Whalen, DVM, CertAqV (2023- 2025) Current Mystic Aquarium Veterinary Intern.

Amber Lum, DVM, CertAqV (2022-2023) She is currently completing the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, Aquatic Animal Medicine Residency.

Michelle Rivard, DVM (2019-2020) She was a veterinarian for the United States Army prior to her internship at Mystic Aquarium. After her Mystic Aquarium internship, she completed the Marine Mammal Medicine and Pathology Fellowship at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito before transitioning to the sole veterinarian at Sealife Response Rehab and Research (SR3) in Washington. Michelle is currently the Director of Animal Health and Conservation at Marine Mammal Care Center- Los Angeles.

John Griffioen, DVM (2018-2019) He completed a veterinary internship at the Indianapolis Zoo and is now an Associate Veterinarian at the Fort Worth Zoo.

Melissa Joblon, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (2016-2018) She is currently the Director of Animal Health at the New England Aquarium.

Ari Fustukjian, DVM (2015-2016) He worked as Senior Veterinarian at Florida Aquarium and is now the Vice President of Zoological Operations for the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium.

Sophie Whoriskey, DVM (2014-2015) She completed an internship at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito and was an Associate Veterinarian at the California Academy of Sciences. She is currently the Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation Veterinarian at The Marine Mammal Care Center in Hawaii.

Allyson McNaughton, DVM (2012-2014) She is currently the Chief Clinical Veterinarian at the Virginia Aquarium.

Jen Flower, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACZM (2010-2012) She completed the University of Illinois Zoological and Aquatic Animal Residency and then became an Associate Veterinarian at the Brookfield Zoo. She spent 5 years as the Chief Clinical Veterinarian at Mystic Aquarium and now works as a veterinarian at Disney.

Claire Erlacher-Reid, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (2009-2010) She completed the Aquatic Animal Medicine Residency at the University of Florida. She was previously a Senior Staff Veterinarian at SeaWorld San Diego and is currently a Senior Staff Veterinarian at SeaWorld Orlando.

Barbara Biancani, DVM, PhD, Dipl. ECZM (2008-2009) She completed a PhD at the University of Padova and is currently a veterinarian at Oltremare Park in Italy.

Cara Field, DVM, PhD, Dipl. ACZM (2007-2008) She worked with the University of Connecticut and Mystic Aquarium as a post-doctoral researcher. She then was an Associate Veterinarian at the Audubon Nature Institute and a Senior Associate Veterinarian at Georgia Aquarium. Currently she is the Medical Director of The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito.

Jenny Meegan, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (2006-2007) She completed the Aquatic Animal Residency at the University of Florida and is currently a Senior Veterinarian with the National Marine Mammal Foundation.

Delphine Sarran, DVM, ECVS (2005-2006) She completed the veterinary internship at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito. She then completed a surgical internship and residency in France to become a European Specialist in Veterinary Surgery at CVH Atlantia.

Michelle Davis, DVM, Dipl. ACZM, EBVS (2004-2005) She completed the University of Illinois Zoological and Aquatic Animal Residency. She has been a veterinarian at the Oklahoma City Zoo, SeaWorld Orlando, Georgia Aquarium, and is now the Aquatic Health Department Head for the Wildlife Conservation Society's New York Aquarium.

Allison Tuttle, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (2002-2004) She completed the Aquatic Animal Medicine Residency at North Carolina State University and is currently the Chief Zoological Officer at Mystic Aquarium.

Todd Schmitt, DVM (2001-2002) He is currently a Senior Staff Veterinarian at SeaWorld San Diego.

Carrie Goertz, MS, DVM (1999-2001) She worked to create a new stranding center for marine mammals at the University of New England and conducted research at the University of Southern Maine. Currently she is a Staff Veterinarian and researcher at the Alaska Sea Life Center.

Scott Willens, DVM, PhD, ACVPM (1998-1999) He received his PhD from North Carolina State University in comparative biomedical sciences, retired from the Army with 20 years of active duty service as a Lieutenant Colonel, and is currently a founding partner of Neighborhood Veterinary Associates of Clarksburg, MD.

Johanna Sheril, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACZM (1997-1998) She completed the Zoological Medicine Residency at the National Zoo. She was a veterinarian at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach and is currently an Associate Veterinarian and Practice Administrator at Peninsula Animal Hospital.

Lisa St. Aubin, DVM (1996-1997) She was a former director of Primary Care at Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and volunteer at Mystic Aquarium. She is now retired.

Marty Haulena, DVM, MSc, Dipl. ACZM (1995-1996) He was formerly a Staff Veterinarian at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito and is currently the Head Veterinarian and Director of Animal Health at the Vancouver Aquarium.

Kelly Helmick, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (1994-1995) She completed a zoological medicine residency at the University of Florida. She has been a Clinical Veterinarian at Pittsburg Zoo and Aquarium, El Paso Zoo,

Seattle Aquarium, Woodland Park Zoo, and is currently the Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer at the Smithsonian Conservation and Biology Institute.

Tom Lembo, DVM (1993-1994) He completed a residency in clinical pathology at North Carolina State University and practiced as a clinical veterinarian for the Core Research Animal Support facility at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

Sal Frasca Jr., VMD, PhD, Dip. ACVP (1992-1993) He was the first to complete the Mystic Aquarium internship in aquatic animal medicine (1992-1993), after which he completed a PhD in Pathobiology and an Anatomic Pathology Residency at University of Connecticut. He was Professor of Pathobiology at UCONN (1999-2017), then Professor of Aquatic Pathology at the University of Florida (2017-2020), then returned to Connecticut to be Director of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory at UCONN and Professor of Pathobiology (2020-2021). He currently is a contracted pathologist providing aquatic pathology services through ZooQuatic Laboratories, LLC. He serves as Special Graduate Faculty for the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, and he is a longstanding instructor Aquavet program, having been recognized for 25 years of distinguished service by the tor in the Aquavet faculty.