



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.

Emily Pepin, DVM (2025- present) Current Mystic Aquarium Veterinary Intern.

Laura Whalen, DVM, CertAqV (2023- 2025) She is an Associate Veterinarian at South Carolina Aquarium in Charleston, SC.

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. She then completed the Marine Mammal Medicine and Pathology Internship at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito. She was a staff veterinarian at Sealife Response Rehab and Research (SR³) in Washington, and is now the Director of Animal Health and Conservation at the Marine Mammal Care center in Los Angeles, CA.

John Griffioen, DVM (2018-2019) He completed a veterinary internship at the Indianapolis Zoo and is now the Assistant Director of Animal Programs and Conservation 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 Associate Director of The Marine Mammal Center's Hawai'i Conservation Medicine division.

Allyson McNaughton, DVM (2012-2014) She is currently the Chief of Veterinary Science & Research at Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center.

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 is now a clinical veterinarian at The Walt Disney Company.

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 Pairi Daiza in Belgium.

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 Clinical 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 the Director of Animal Health 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. He is currently the Head Veterinarian and Director of Animal Health at the

Vancouver Aquarium and the Executive Director of the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Mammal Rescue Society.

Kelly Helmick, DVM, Dipl. ACZM (1994-1995) She completed a zoological medicine residency at the University of Florida, was an Associate Veterinarian at Pittsburg Zoo and Aquarium, El Paso Zoo, Seattle Aquarium, and Woodland Park Zoo, and was the Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer and Head of the Department of Conservation Medicine at Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation and Biology Institute. She is presently a Senior Veterinary Medical Officer and Avian and Marine Mammal Policy Specialist within USDA- APHIS.

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. Sadly, now deceased.

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.