

IVSO an-vision Travel Scholarship, UC Davis, California, USA
Spring 2024

With the support of the IVSO an-vision Travel Scholarship I could spend 4 weeks at UC Davis Veterinary Ophthalmology Department. These 4 weeks were so great and passed so quickly.

I think I would not get the scholarship without Professor Maggs' support. For the application at first, I reached him and he was so helpful. He was very nice and welcoming in Davis. With his wife, Lynelle, they even invited me for dinner at their home. Such wonderful hosts and good cooks.



With Dr. David Maggs

I was also very lucky with accommodation. Seeing my struggles to find a room through the internet, Dr. Karolina Roszak (2nd year ophthalmology resident) and her husband Tom kindly offered me a room for the first 2 weeks. I had a really nice time staying with them and their cute dog, Maggie.

Afterward, I stayed with Professor Melissa Bain, who is a behaviorist at the Vet School and her husband, Bob plus their dog, Maverick. I felt like a part of their family for these days.

At ophthalmology, I spent my time with a bunch of nice people too. The whole group was so welcoming and friendly. Everyone patiently answered to all of my questions. Talking about anything related to ophthalmology, about any single question, everyone was so enthusiastic and I could feel their passion and love of

ophthalmology. I could see a lot of interesting cases and got useful tips and opinions about case management, different treatment options. It was very useful to share experience about so many aspects of veterinary ophthalmology with these great veterinary ophthalmologists.

I could see some new surgical techniques and also could discuss different aspects of already known and used techniques, which was really handy.

In ophthalmology, 4th year students participate at work. They start with welcoming the clients in the waiting room and moving them to the examination rooms. Taking the history and doing an initial ophthalmology exam including neuroophthalmology, IOP and STT measurement, and a lights-on and lights-off eye examination with the direct ophthalmoscope.

Following this, they present the case with their findings to an ophtho resident who does a full ophthalmic examination with pupil dilation as well - unless it's contraindicated.

The resident then presents their findings to a faculty member and discusses possible treatment plans and outcomes before the faculty do an ophthalmic examination and discuss all findings and plans with the client.

The residents give very detailed descriptions of every single patient, even about the smallest abnormality and finding. I find it amazing and so useful that they practice with every case and do it on a master level.

They are very thorough and knowledgeable with great communication skills. If necessary, a well-trained vet technician can help them anytime. The vet techs also have an important role in helping organize the case management, ordering drugs and equipment, and communicating with clients and with referring vets.

The ophthalmology department had a smooth and fluid work pattern with interesting resident rounds plus student rounds. I must say vet students know a lot about ophthalmology and they have great training including these 2-week rotations in the ophthalmology department.

In the clinic they have excellent "toys" including ERG, high-frequency ultrasound biomicroscopy (UBM), and OCT, plus the "basics" (slit lamp biomicroscope, tonometers, indirect and direct ophthalmoscopes, gonioscopes and ultrasound machines).

As a part of William R. Pritchard Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, there is access to x-ray, MRI and CT scans, endoscopy and even lacrimoscopy (!) which I could see while Dr. Leonard and Dr. Mills were investigating a case of dacryops in a Golden Retriever. For the operations, trained and experienced anesthesia staff do all the anesthesia.

I could see some interesting equine cases too. For example, a phaco surgery, performed by Dr. Bianca Martins, looked "the easiest thing in the world".

There were some exotic patients too like a bearded dragon and owls from the California Raptor Center.

Thanks to Dr. Sara Thomasy I could have an insight into the Comparative Ophthalmology and Vision Science Laboratory where they work on interesting research about cataracts, corneal endothelial degeneration, and SARDS.

The Vet School is on a beautiful campus with a nice park and an arboretum. I commonly saw running squirrels, rabbits, some ducks and of course, turkeys.

Davis is a beautiful town, with a vibrant life of thousands of university students and staff members.

I had a wonderful time there thanks to everyone at ophthalmology and my hosts. I hope I can go back and we can meet again.

Thank you all and last but not least I would like to thank the IVSO and an-vision for this opportunity.

This was a very nice and useful journey.

István Benkő (Hungary)



"Laid back in California" with a part of the ophthalmology team