

## Preventative Health Clinic Pairs USU Students With Local Vets for Firsthand Experience

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11/02/2021

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Students from Utah State University's School of Veterinary Medicine put their skills to the test on October 9. Under the guidance of local veterinarians, the students administered vaccines, performed exams, and created medical records for their own pet cats and dogs.

In one room, second-year students Liza Sperry, Jessica Border, and Emma Phinney worked with Isla, a 5-year-old Labrador retriever mix. The dog waited stoically as the future veterinarians did bloodwork, checked for heart murmurs, and poked and prodded to locate her jugular. The supervising veterinarian offered advice on everything from estimating weight to how to approach difficult topics with patients.

"A lot of the vets have so much experience and so many cool tricks to teach us," said Sperry, Isla's owner. "Like slowing a cat's heart rate or bringing them out of a seizure by pressing their eye. Or how to do more complex tests, like thyroid slips or cranial drawer tests." (Because only trained professionals can safely use these techniques, they should not be tried at home.)



Border agreed that the experience was useful. "Physical exams can differ depending on how fractious your patient is," she said. "For example, the steps to do a physical exam on a cat can change if they're nervous or calm. It was pretty neat. We learned really cool things today, and I feel more prepared."

The event was sponsored by the Preventative Health Clinic, one of several student-run clubs within the School of Veterinary Medicine. President Katherine Trepanier was pleased with how the day went.

"This clinic is a really important part of the USU vet school," Trepanier said. "Since we don't have a teaching hospital, it gives students the opportunity to learn how to be a vet and prepare them for fourth-year rotations. We're grateful for the vets who sacrificed their Saturday to come and help us learn!"

USU's School of Veterinary Medicine is part of the Washington-Idaho-Montana-Utah Regional (WIMU) Program, a partnership of four universities that offers a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. Students spend two years at USU's Logan campus before finishing their education at Washington State University's Pullman campus.