

CCC TO OFFER ONLINE VET TECH PROGRAM

Written by Debbie Schwanke

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Colby Community College President Dr. Steve Vacik recently announced that the college has received a \$960,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture to develop a Distance Learning Veterinary Technology Program. The grant will provide funding for development of distance learning courses and salaries for two veterinarians, two registered veterinary technician instructors and an administrative assistant for the distance learning program.

The new program will be the first distance learning veterinary technology program originating from a Kansas college. There are currently nine distance learning veterinary technology programs in the United States accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. CCC will seek AVMA accreditation for this program.

The on-campus Veterinary Technology Program at CCC is the only veterinary technology program in Kansas fully accredited by the AVMA. In addition, the on-campus CCC program was one of the first veterinary technology programs established in the United States, achieving initial accreditation in 1974.

In 2010, the graduates of the on-campus program had a 100 percent pass rate on the Veterinary Technician National Board Examination.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, veterinary technology is one of the fastest growing careers, projected to grow by 36 percent from 2008 to 2018. The distance learning program will allow the college to educate students across the nation with an interest in this high demand field. Veterinary technician students are taught skills such as animal restraint and handling, anesthesia, radiology, surgical nursing, and clinical laboratory techniques.

“Graduates of the CCC Veterinary Technology Program have abundant employment opportunities,” said Dr. Jennifer Martin, program director. “The majority of our graduates are employed by veterinarians in private practice, but some find employment in zoos, humane societies, colleges and universities, laboratories, pet food companies, and race tracks.”

In addition to Dr. Martin, instructors in the on-campus program include veterinarian Dr. Cathy

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McMulkin and registered veterinary technician Sadie Kenney. The Veterinary Technology faculty has over 41 years of combined teaching experience.

“The college is currently waiting on approval for the distance learning programs from the Higher Learning Commission,” said Dr. Vacik. “We are expecting to receive that approval in October.”

The distance learning program at CCC is anticipated to start in January 2012.

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