

### **Georgie Holiday – Summer camp, Massachusetts, 2016**

This summer I spent seven weeks in Massachusetts, USA, working with 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders on a summer camp. The camp, called EXPLO, is based at Wheaton College in Norton, around 40 minutes outside of Boston. It is a fairly well-known camp in the USA, and has produced a number of notable alumni.

My role at EXPLO was made up of two main parts. Firstly, I was the lead teacher of EXPLO Vet Focus, a course run for children who were interested in a career in veterinary science or animal care. This involved running activities and lessons to help the kids understand basic scientific ideas such as major organ anatomy, physiology, and diagnostic techniques- I feel like I have developed the ability to explain complicated ideas in a very simplistic way, which is really useful for dealing with clients when I am working as a vet. The aim of the activities was always to teach in an active and engaging way so I always tried to make them practical; for example, we did dissections, CPR training, splinting practice, and suturing. We also did a number of trips to show the kids what life as a vet is actually like- we went to Franklin Park Zoo (where we got an exclusive tour of the zoo hospital), Angell Animal Medical Centre (one of the oldest animal hospitals in the country), Boston Animal League Shelter, and Ocean State Equine Hospital. Finally, we had a number of guest speakers who came to talk to the class about their experience working in a career with animals. These speakers often brought animals with them to give the class some hands-on experience with the animals. I thought it was an amazing opportunity for the kids that I would have loved to attend when I was their age! I thoroughly enjoyed teaching the class and being there to help show them how great a career in veterinary medicine can be.

My other role was that of a residential advisor. With this, I was in charge of a residential floor of 14 students. I was responsible for waking them up and getting them ready for breakfast in the mornings, taking attendance at assemblies throughout the day, entertaining them in the evening and at dinner, and making sure they went to bed on time. I was also the person they talked to if they had any problems like homesickness, illness, or bullying etc. Although not directly related to the academic parts of my degree, this part of my job definitely helped me to develop some important skills for being a vet; namely, patience and empathy. I also think the fact that I only had four days off all summer (including weekends!) is good preparation for the demands of a career as a vet.

Overall, I loved my time at EXPLO and am grateful for the Mill Lane travel grant for helping me to gain such vital skills and allowing me to have such a great experience.