

May 8, 2026

VET TECH FRIDAYS

Knowledge, News, and Updates



Meet the Faculty

Kayleigh Howell, AAS, RVT



We are excited to welcome Mrs. Kayleigh Howell to Vet Tech Institute of Indiana as our new Kennel Manager!

Mrs. Howell is a proud 2017 graduate of VTI and brings 8 years of clinical experience in a small animal emergency and specialty setting. Her professional interests include neurology, patient well-being, and inventory management, all of which play an important role in maintaining a high standard of care for our animals.

At home, Mrs. Howell stays just as busy. She and her husband have two children, McCoy and Lainey, along with a full house of pets including three dogs, Ruger, Billie, and Chase, and two cats, Oliver and Henry. They definitely keep her on her toes!

In her free time, Mrs. Howell enjoys reading and spending time with family and friends.

We are so happy to have Mrs. Howell as part of the VTI team and look forward to the experience and care she brings to our kennel and students.

Mrs. Howell has these words of advice for students, “Everyone has to start somewhere and remember why you started! Take all the training opportunities offered to you and just wait and see how much you will blossom as the awesome vet techs we know you are!”

Student of the Week

Leonardo Jaramillo



This week, we are excited to recognize Leonardo Jaramillo as our Student of the Week!

Leo has truly stood out for his dedication, professionalism, and strong work ethic. He has been incredibly proactive in making sure he is prepared and ready to succeed, and it is clear that he is putting in the work to build both his knowledge and confidence. His commitment to learning has not gone unnoticed by his instructors or classmates.

In addition to his academic effort, Leo is always willing to help his team without hesitation. He approaches both his patients and peers with kindness, gentleness, and respect while still bringing a positive attitude and sense of humor to the classroom and clinic environment. His eagerness to learn and grow as a future veterinary technician is evident in everything he does.

Leo’s compassion, teamwork, and determination make him a wonderful example of the qualities we value at Vet Tech Institute of Indiana. We are so proud of the hard work he continues to put in each day.

Congratulations, Leo!

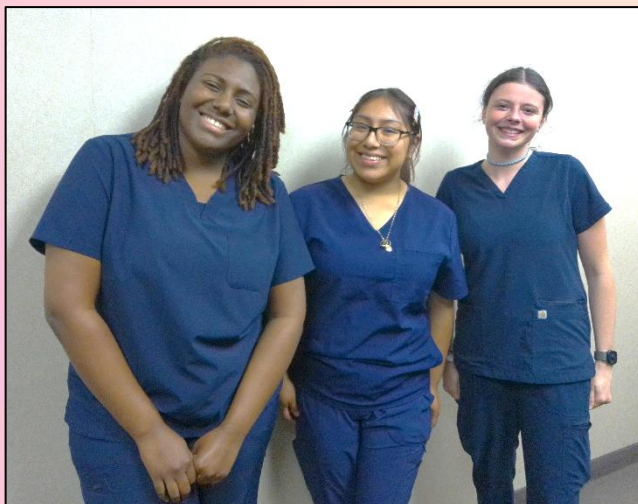
Tutoring

Hours:

Monday through Friday - 7:00 – 8:00 AM

Monday through Thursday - 2:30 – 5:30 PM

Meet the Team:



Edith Morales-Hernandez
07DV25



Trick for studying: Always have snacks! The best way to retain information is while you're eating.

Motivation: My parents, they have taught me that hard work never goes unnoticed and are the reason I continue to try my best every day.

Fun fact: I love going on trails/hikes! During our free period, my friends and I will walk on trails to help us rest

Favorite subjects: An Tech, Clin Lab, and Clin Med.

Starr Gray
11DV25



Trick for studying: Timers and flash cards.

Motivation: My family, friends, and pets.

Fun fact: I have been playing softball for 9 years so far!

Favorite subjects: Clin Lab and Anatomy

Lexi Lloyd
03DV25



Trick for studying: Using flash cards.

Motivation: My passion for animals and their medical care.

Fun fact: I have 7 siblings!

Favorite subjects: An Tech, Clin Med, and Math.



HAPPY
TEACHER
APPRECIATION
WEEK!

WE LOVE OUR
VET TECH INSTITUTE
OF INDIANA
INSTRUCTORS!

The central graphic features a light blue grid background. At the top left is an icon of an open book. At the top right is an icon of an apple. At the bottom left is an icon of a globe. At the bottom center is an icon of a circle containing the letters 'A+'. At the bottom right is an icon of a pencil.



THANK YOU INSTRUCTORS

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 4-8, 2026

Our instructors are truly the heart of Vet Tech Institute of Indiana, and during Teacher Appreciation Week, students and staff made sure they felt celebrated!

Students brought flowers, sweet treats, and created a thoughtful appreciation poster to thank our instructors for their dedication, patience, and support.

We also spoiled our teaching team with a Panera breakfast and team notepads as a small thank-you for everything they do.

We are so grateful for the knowledge, compassion, and encouragement our instructors pour into our students and animals every single day!



Externship Tales

**Emma Gentry
11DV24**

Emma Gentry shared this picture of her holding THE most Adorable little goat that came into her clinic to be disbudded, and it's a great opportunity to talk about what that actually means...

What is disbudding?

Disbudding is a common veterinary procedure performed on young goats, typically within the first week or two of life. It involves removing or destroying the horn-producing tissue (called horn buds) before the horns have a chance to fully develop.

Why is it done?

There are several important reasons why disbudding is recommended in most domestic settings:

- **Safety:** Horns can pose a risk to other animals, handlers, and even the goat itself.
- **Handling and housing:** Goats without horns are easier to manage and less likely to get stuck in fencing or equipment.
- **Injury prevention:** Horned goats are more likely to injure others during play or herd interactions.

How is it performed?

A veterinarian or trained professional typically uses a heated disbudding iron to cauterize the horn bud. This prevents future horn growth. The procedure is quick, and proper pain management is used to minimize discomfort.

What should students take away?

- Even though the patient might look tiny and cute, procedures like this play a big role in long-term animal welfare. As future veterinary professionals, understanding the “why” behind these practices is just as important as knowing the “how.”
- Moments like these are a reminder that veterinary medicine isn't just about caring for animals when they're sick. It's also about making thoughtful decisions early in life that help animals stay safe, healthy, and easier to care for long term.
- It is also important to note that timing matters, as disbudding is safest and most effective when performed before the horn attaches to the skull.
- Students may also hear the term “dehorning,” which is different and refers to removing fully developed horns, a much more invasive procedure.
- Proper restraint, technique, and pain management are essential to ensure the procedure is done humanely and successfully.
- Experiences like this help build confidence in handling small ruminants and reinforce the importance of early preventive care in veterinary medicine.



GUESS WHO – ANSWERS
Abby Teitsort is our WINNER!



Mrs. Crocker



Mrs. Dixon



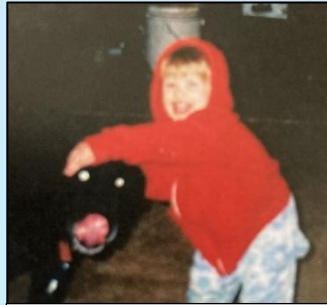
Mrs. Golden



Mrs. Hix



Mrs. Howell



Mrs. Kleiman



Ms. Lewis



Mrs. Long



Mrs. Norton



Dr. Ritz



Mrs. Schuster



Mrs. Stout



Mr. Williams

Student Voices

Lexi Lloyd

03DV25

My time here at VTI has truly been one of the most meaningful chapters of my life. Beyond the classes and late-night study sessions, it's the relationships I've built that have made this experience unforgettable. The friendships I've formed here have been some of the deepest and most genuine I've ever known, people who have supported me, challenged me, and celebrated every small victory along the way. These connections have shaped who I am and will stay with me long after this chapter ends.



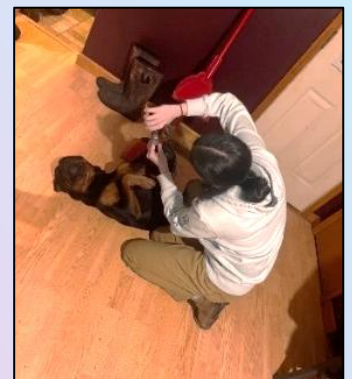
I'll always be grateful for the laughter, the growth, and the incredible people who turned these months into something so special. In the same light, the care and dedication of my instructors have impacted me in the best ways possible. They have been amazing examples of what good, strong veterinary technicians look like. Just as much as they care about the animals, they care about their students. They have supported me in ways I'll never forget. In moments when I felt overwhelmed and doubted whether I could keep going, they showed patience, understanding, and belief in me, even when I struggled to find it in myself. Their encouragement and guidance pulled me through some of my toughest times, reminding me that I was capable of more than I realized. Because of them, I didn't just make it through, I grew stronger, more confident, and more determined than ever. I truly believe that one of the greatest aspects of attending college is the people you meet and the memories you make with them.



Aside from the many amazing moments here at VTI, I have been through many struggles in my time here. Losing my grandpa, who was more than family (he was my best friend), came at a time when everything in school already felt overwhelming. I was struggling to keep up, doubting myself and trying to push through challenges that seemed endless. Then suddenly, the person who grounded me, who always listened without judgment and reminded me I was capable was gone. It felt like the one steady piece of my life had disappeared, and even simple things became exhausting. There were days when just showing up felt impossible, when grief and pressure blurred together, and I questioned how I could keep going without him in my corner.

But even during that time, I held onto the lessons he taught me, his quiet strength, his belief in me, and somehow, step by step, I kept moving forward, even when it hurt more than I could explain. Since this happened within the first week of a new term, I missed an entire week of classes. Because of this, I had all Ds and Fs that took me the entire term to raise. As a student who typically maintains good grades, I felt defeated. With the help and support of my friends, family, peers, and instructors, I did it. I put the time and hard work in and got grades I felt I could be proud of again. While I am still dealing with this grief, I have come a long way thanks to the amazing people I surround myself with.

One of the biggest pieces of advice I have for the students here is to be sure you are taking care of yourself!! This program is far from easy, and it is very hard to lose yourself in the schoolwork. Though the most important thing on your journey here is YOU! Taking care of yourself and maintaining a healthy balance between school and life isn't just helpful, it's essential. When everything moves quickly and expectations are high, it's easy to get caught up in constant work and forget that your well-being directly affects your ability to succeed. Making time to rest, eat well, stay active, and connect with people outside of school helps prevent burnout and keeps your mind clear and focused. Strong school-life balance allows you to recharge, manage stress more effectively, and approach challenges with a healthier perspective, rather than feeling overwhelmed by them. In the long run, prioritizing yourself doesn't take away from your success, it's what makes it sustainable!

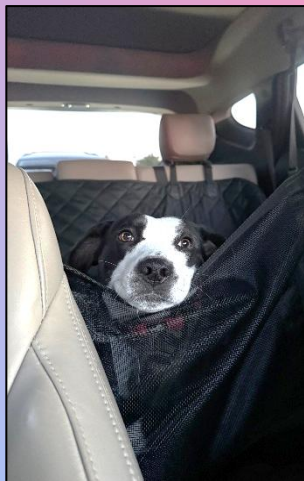


Spring Break Photos

07DV25 student Mia Myers and 03DV25 student Lexi Lloyd took advantage of the beautiful weather with a fun lunch date outside at Starbucks!



07DV25 student Emalee Goss spent her break enjoying plenty of rides with her beautiful horse, Frannie!



11DV25 student Kady Whitehead enjoyed a fun weekend trip to Chicago with her friend and Rigby, who was adopted from VTI! The trio explored the city together and made lots of great memories.



07DV25 student Mia Myers and 03DV25 student Lexi Lloyd enjoyed spending time together and soaking up the sunshine at the lake over break!



11DV25 students Arianna Smith and Kady Whitehead enjoyed some quality time together with a fun lunch outing to Chili's over break!

07DV25 student Emalee Goss spent part of her break caring for her dog, Allis, during a trip to the vet!



Spring Break Photos



11DV25 student Amie McManus enjoyed spending time kayaking over break with her precious dog, Teka, by her side!



07DV25 student Lexi McCormick and her boyfriend recently welcomed two adorable new additions to their family, sibling blue heelers Lilly and Rose! These sweet pups are sure to be spoiled with love and affection for years to come.



Happy Birthday to 11DV25 student Jenna DeCoursey! Pictured is her favorite birthday gift yet, sweet 6-month-old Hazel the chocolate lab.



Spring Break Photos

03DV26 student Eliana Baiza captured this beautiful Indiana sunset over spring break and shared it with us!



07DV25 student Josphine Earl's dog seems to be saying with his expression, "He's making that face again, isn't he?"

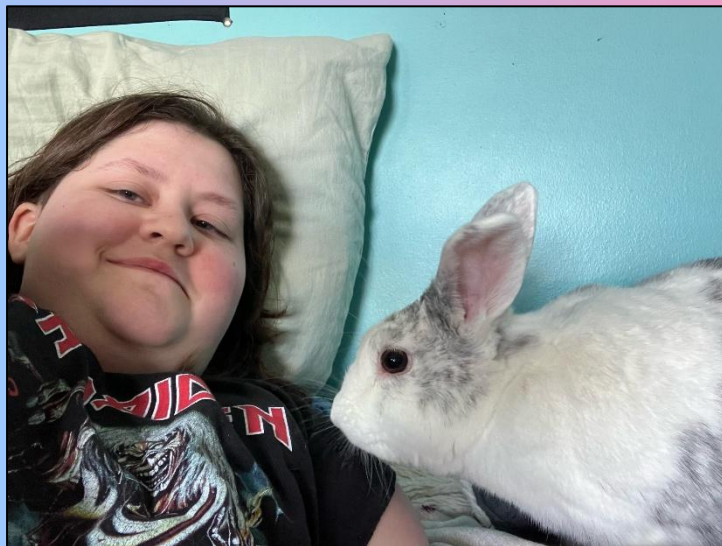
07DV25 student James Ball was all smiles after winning \$100 at BINGO over break!



03DV26 student Virgen Suluaga spent part of her break caring for her baby boy, Akilis, after his neuter, dental cleaning, and tumor removal. Wishing Akilis a smooth recovery and plenty of rest!



11DV25 student Kady Whitehead takes treat time very seriously when it comes to her best friend's dog, Butterscotch!



07DV25 student James Ball hosted Queen Victoria the bunny over spring break! She cuddled right up to James and seemed to thoroughly enjoy her time lounging around and relaxing.



Spring Break Photos



Nothing better than spring break with your people. 11DV25 roommates Wynter Harris, Aubri DeLong, and Maddie Neal took on Florida together and made the most of their time away.



Spring Break Photos



03DV25 students Lucy Jones, Bonnie Rexroat, and Liz Dodd enjoyed a fun Target run during break. Shop till you drop, ladies!



PLAYA DEL CARMEN
APR 26, 2026 AT 4:46 PM SUNNY 89.6°F

A Playa Del Carmen trip was in the books for Kelsey Bailey over spring break!



11DV25 student Kelsey Bailey is making sure her new puppy, Gypsy, has plenty of enrichment toys to keep her happy, busy, and entertained!



11DV25 student Ava Scheerer spent most of her spring break in Fort Myers relaxing at the beach, kayaking, biking, and enjoying time by the pool!



Spring Break Photos



11DV25 students Sarah Somerville and Ava Scheerer spent some time together over break enjoying the Indianapolis nightlife!



03DV26 student Eliana Baiza's adorable dog, Dexter, definitely knows how to work the room when it comes to begging for treats!



11DV25 students Chloe Trick and Jazmyne Wallace spent some time together over break hanging out with Jasmine the kitty!



Have you spotted any of these adorable creations around campus? If you're lucky enough to befriend 11DV25 student Kady Whitehead, she just might crochet one of these cuties for you too! This one is happily going home with Mr. Williams and was created in the likeness of his dog, Jade.



11DV25 student Stephanie Bradley spent part of her break cuddled up with her sweet kitties, Hazel and Pepper, while rewatching *Grey's Anatomy*!



Spring Break Photos



03DV26 student Eliana Baiza traveled to Missouri with her best friend to celebrate another close friend graduating from basic training!



07DV25 student Zoe Barker and her adorable VTI foster, Richie, took a quick break for a cute selfie together!



11DV25 students Chloe Trick and Kady Whitehead treated themselves to a well-deserved day out, fresh pedicures and Mexican food to top it off!



11DV25 student Kendall Hobbs visited Kennedy Space Center in Florida!



11DV25 student Riley Packard relaxed in the sun with her sweet German Shepherd, Suki, after a challenging and successful training session!



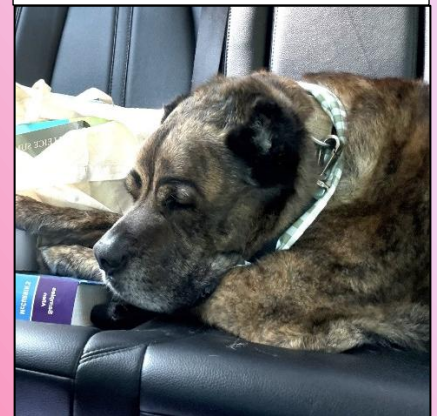
Spring Break Photos



11DV25 student Kendall Hobbs enjoyed learning more about NASA during a visit to the Vehicle Assembly Building at Kennedy Space Center!



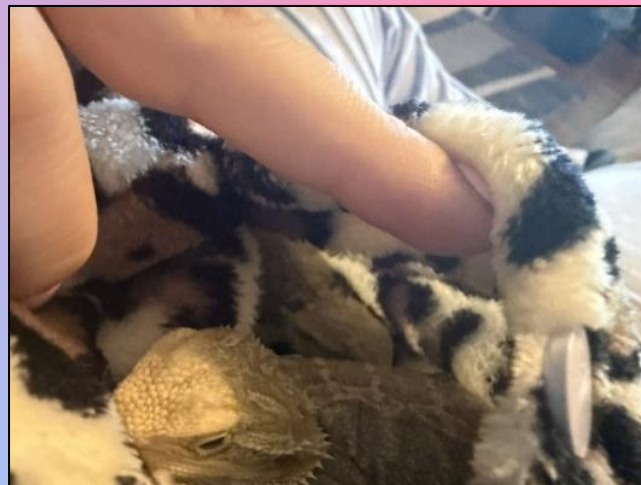
07DV25 student Autumn Langenecker gave her dog Kane a hilarious glow-up over spring break, with temporary, dog-safe eyebrows courtesy of the groomer! Kane seemed pretty proud of his new look... and even took a post-grooming nap in the car to rest up after his makeover.



11DV25 student Stephanie Bradley had the honor of being a bridesmaid in her best friend's wedding over break!



03DV26 student Eliana Baiza enjoyed cheering on the home team during a fun trip to a Cincinnati Reds game!



11DV25 student Chloe Trick spending some quality time with her bearded dragon, Bambi, cozy, content, and right at home in her pouch.

Photos Around Campus



The first day of a new term is underway! Dr. Joy Ritz reviews surgery term expectations and instructions with some of the 03DV25 students as they begin this exciting next chapter of the program.

Shoe twins for the day!
Mrs. Schuster and 03DV26 student
Maya Pickett show off their fabulous
Friday footwear.



11DV24 student Rylan Foxx gave a short presentation about her externship experience to the 03DV25 and 07DV25 cohorts, who will soon be starting their own externships.

The externship presentations were engaging, insightful, and incredibly impressive. It was clear how much the students have learned during their experiences, and the stories they shared, especially some of their most interesting cases, made a lasting impact on the newer cohorts.



Students in Mrs. Long's class put their creativity on display with these colorful canine illustrations, bringing a little extra life (and personality!) to the walls.

Photos Around Campus



Walking Taco Night at student housing was a big hit!

These students happily proved that sometimes the best friendships in college are the unexpected ones, including friendships with students from completely different cohorts.

Pictured above: 03DV26 student Wade Short, 07DV25 students Lexi McCormick and Mia Myers, 03DV25 student Lexi Lloyd, and 11DV25 student Jenna DeCoursey.



03DV25 student Jane Guest proudly shows off the Indiana Fever shirt she received for participating in one of our on-campus blood drives. Thank you for donating, Jane!

11DV25 students Kenzy Triezenberg and Bernice Tooley diligently worked on completing the necessary documents for their advocacy time today!



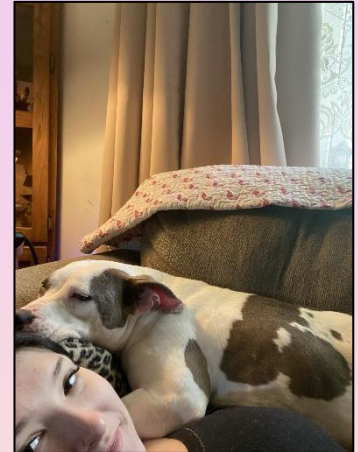
Adoption Spotlight:

Gypsy

We're so excited to share this heartwarming adoption story from 11DV25 student Kelsey Bailey and her new companion, Gypsy!

Gypsy is already settling into her new home and becoming part of the family. While her journey started off with a bit of excitement, including a memorable car ride that didn't quite go as planned, she didn't take long to adjust once she arrived. From the moment she got home, Gypsy quickly picked up on going outside in the backyard and has only had a few accidents along the way.

Now, she's living the good life. Gypsy has her own clothes, enrichment puzzles, and plenty of cuddles. She especially loves being as close as possible to her people and soaking up all the attention she can get.



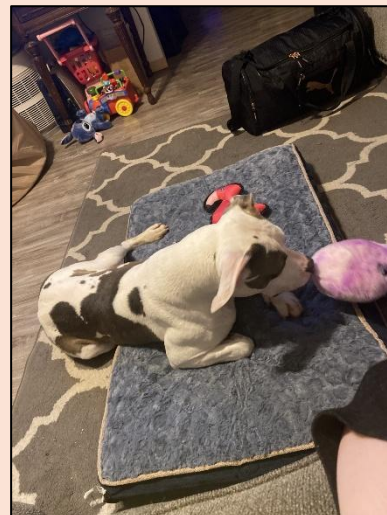
Kelsey shared that Gypsy has already shown what a gentle and loving temperament she has. When introduced to a small child, she was calm, sweet, and incredibly well-mannered. It's clear she has a special way of connecting with everyone she meets.



One of the most special parts of Gypsy's story is how warmly she's been welcomed. Kelsey shared how much it means that her entire family has embraced Gypsy as one of their own.

And in true "new dog, new home" fashion, Gypsy even enjoyed a cozy first night watching *Sofia the First* in her brand-new pajamas. It's safe to say she's already found her place.

*Congratulations to Kelsey and Gypsy on finding each other.
We love seeing our students give animals the loving homes they deserve!*



Underrated Animals

Secretarybird: The Snake-Stomping Raptor That Hunts Like a Dinosaur

Secretarybirds are one of the strangest birds on Earth because they hunt mostly on foot instead of from the air. They can walk more than 20 miles in a single day through African grasslands, stomping through tall vegetation looking for prey. Despite being birds of prey, they behave more like tiny, feathered velociraptors.

Their kicks are unbelievably powerful. A secretarybird can strike prey with a force strong enough to kill venomous snakes in milliseconds, including cobras and puff adders. They often spread their wings like shields while attacking to protect themselves from bites. Researchers have clocked some strikes at speeds faster than the human eye can easily track.



They are surprisingly tall. Most stand around 4 feet high, making them one of the tallest birds of prey in the world. When they fly, though, they suddenly look elegant and crane-like, with huge, black-tipped wings and long trailing legs.



Their parenting style is intense and surprisingly sweet. Secretarybirds usually mate for life and build giant stick nests high in thorny acacia trees. Both parents help incubate the eggs and raise the chicks. Adults will bring food to the nest and sometimes regurgitate partially digested prey directly into the chicks' mouths. The babies stay dependent for months and practice stomping behaviors long before they can hunt properly.

Only one or two chicks usually survive because sibling competition is brutal. The older chick often dominates feedings and grows much faster. In harsh years, weaker chicks may not make it.

They live longer than most people realize. In the wild, secretarybirds can live around 10 to 15 years, but in captivity some have reached nearly 20 years old.

Global warming and habitat loss are becoming serious problems for them. Secretarybirds need wide open grasslands to hunt effectively, but climate change is increasing droughts and altering those ecosystems across Africa. Expanding agriculture, overgrazing, human development, and more frequent wildfires are shrinking the open savannas they depend on. Because they nest in isolated trees surrounded by grassland, habitat fragmentation makes breeding harder too. Their populations have declined enough that they are now considered endangered in some parts of their range.



One obscure fact is where their name probably came from. Many historians think the “secretary” part came from the bird’s long black head feathers, which resemble the quill pens that 1800s office secretaries used to tuck behind their ears. Another theory is that the name evolved from an Arabic phrase describing a hunter bird.

They also cool themselves in a bizarre way. On very hot days, secretarybirds sometimes urinate on their own legs, like storks and vultures, to lower their body temperature through evaporation.

Their eyelashes are huge and dramatic up close. Those long lashes help protect their eyes from dust and thrashing grass while they hunt.

Even their walking is weirdly efficient. Unlike most birds that hop or wobble, secretarybirds stride with long, deliberate steps almost like fashion models. Watching one casually march through the savanna while hunting deadly snakes feels oddly unsettling.



TL;DR: The Secretarybird is a tall African bird of prey that hunts mostly on foot and is famous for killing venomous snakes with lightning-fast kicks. They mate for life, raise chicks together in huge tree nests, and can walk over 20 miles a day while hunting. Climate change and habitat loss are shrinking the open grasslands they depend on, contributing to population decline. They also have giant eyelashes, cool themselves by peeing on their legs, and may have been named after old-fashioned secretaries who carried quill pens behind their ears.

FOR THE KIDS (FTK) - ZOO CREW -

CONCESSIONS @ INDIANAPOLIS ZOO

**WORK
WHEN YOU WANT!**

Students working FTK
CONCESSIONS -
Everyone loves it!

**NO LONG-TERM
COMMITMENT!**

- WHAT THIS IS: -



Serve Burgers & Pretzels



Scoop Ice Cream & Dippin' Dots

Work Fun Concession Stands

- MINIMUM PROGRAM DONATION:
\$75/DAY

- WHY PEOPLE LOVE IT:

- ✓ Pick Events YOU Want
- ✓ Evenings & Weekends
- ✓ Super Flexible Schedule!



THE VIBE:

- ✓ Fun & Fast!
- ✓

EASY MONEY!

SCAN HERE TO
SIGN UP!



Forthekidsinc5@gmail.com



FortheKidsinc5@gmail.com

INDIANAPOLIS 500!!!

CONCESSIONS CREW NEEDED!

Fast Cars. Fast Money. Big Impact!



LOOKING FOR 50 VOLUNTEERS!



Average program support
~\$250 per volunteer!



POUR BEER &
SERVE NACHOS!



 **SHIFT: 5AM - 5PM** • SUNDAY, MAY 24TH • INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY

- SERVE FOOD & DRINKS • Fuel the Fans
- Fuel the Fans • Have a Blast!

Secure the Bag!

Pour Beer. Serve Nachos.
Watch Races!



SCAN TO SIGN UP!
* Limited spots available!

SIGN UP NOW!

No Experience Necessary • Just Bring the Energy!

NEWSLETTER PHOTO SUBMISSION

We are looking to include more student life photos in our weekly newsletter, and we would love your help.

How to Participate:

→ Please make sure you receive permission from all students in the photo before submitting it.

→ Please include the names of the students in the picture if you can, but if not, I can figure them out.

→ You can email photos to me at any time at amiller@vettechinstitute.edu



Important reminder:

Photos must NOT include any Vet Tech Institute animals. This is very important for our animal partnership policies.

Good photo ideas:

- Studying with classmates
- Hanging out in the student lounge
- Working on homework together
- Housing/apartment life
- Campus events
- Group selfies with classmates
- Fun moments between classes



VTI STUDENT VOICES

We are excited to introduce a new section in our newsletter featuring YOU!

Students are invited to submit:

A short article (200-400 words)

An optional photo of yourself

Not sure what to write about? Here are some ideas:

A reflection about your experience

Advice for other students

Why you chose veterinary technology

A challenge you've overcome in the program

What has surprised you most so far

A meaningful moment in kennel or class

Study tips or time management strategies

What motivates you to keep going on tough days

Your goals after graduation

What being part of VTI means to you

If selected, your submission will be featured in the newsletter,
and you will receive a small thank-you gift as a token of appreciation.

Submit your entry by emailing Ashley Miller at amiller@vettechinstitute.edu.

Please include your name and cohort with your submission.

All submissions should be respectful, appropriate, and school-related.

Please note that submissions may be lightly edited for clarity, length, and professionalism.

No need to be a "perfect writer" – we just want to hear your voice and your experience.

Being featured is also a great addition to your resume or professional portfolio.

Let your voice be heard! We can't wait to hear your story.

