

August 21, 2026

VET TECH FRIDAYS

Knowledge, News, and Updates



Faculty Spotlight

Caitlyn Dixon, B.S., RVT



If you've ever sat in Mrs. Dixon's Exotic Animal Technology or Clinical Medicine class, you already know her passion for veterinary care goes well beyond the basics. A 2010 graduate of Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science in History and Classical Culture (plus a minor in Ancient Studies), Mrs. Dixon continued her education and earned her Associate of Science in Veterinary Technology from Vet Tech Institute of Indiana in 2011.

Before stepping into the classroom in 2018, Mrs. Dixon worked as a Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) and eventually became the head RVT at the Avian and Exotic Animal Clinic of Indianapolis. Her professional experience, especially with exotic species, adds depth and authenticity to her teaching, something her students truly appreciate.

When asked about her favorite part of teaching, Mrs. Dixon shared, "Exotic Animal Medicine is where my heart is. I love being able to show students that there's a whole world of veterinary care beyond cats and dogs."

Mrs. Dixon's home life is just as vibrant as her classroom. She and her husband Andrew are the proud parents of three darling daughters; Rivyn, Juniper, and Rvette. Their household is full of life, thanks to an impressive collection of pets including leopard geckos, two ball pythons, an axolotl, four dogs, and a clowder of cats. (And yes, she admits she has a favorite, Jawa, who sometimes visits the school and wins over everyone he meets.)

Outside of teaching and family life, Mrs. Dixon is an avid reader with a love for romance and fantasy novels. She enjoys kayaking and tubing with her family, riding her Harley-Davidson on sunny days, and expressing herself through tattoos. She has 13 so far, with 9 inspired by Harry Potter and Star Wars, and her latest is a tribute to ACOTAR (A Court of Thorns and Roses) book series.

Whether she's guiding students through the intricacies of exotic animal care or bringing one of her beloved pets in for a visit, Mrs. Dixon brings energy, expertise, and a deep love for the field to everything she does.

Student of the Week

Alexis McCormick

We are excited to recognize Alexis (Lexi) McCormick as our Student of the Week!

Lexi consistently stands out for her kindness, positive attitude, and willingness to help those around her. She is communicative, respectful, and thoughtful, and she always seems to have a smile on her face. Even when situations become busy or stressful, she maintains a great attitude and handles herself with maturity and professionalism.

In addition to being a dedicated student, Lexi also serves as one of our Resident Assistants, a role in which she continually goes above and beyond what is asked of her. From welcoming new students on Orientation Day and helping with student events to simply taking the time to say hello to students in the hallways, she makes a genuine effort to help others feel welcomed, comfortable, and included at VTI.

She can always be counted on to follow through on what is asked of her and is trustworthy, dependable, hardworking, and willing to step in wherever she is needed. No matter the task, a positive attitude and desire to do her best are always evident in the way Lexi approaches her responsibilities.

That kindness and upbeat personality do not go unnoticed, and we are very fortunate to have her as part of our VTI community.



IF OUR VTI FACULTY AND STAFF WERE DOGS, WHAT BREEDS WOULD THEY BE?



We want to hear from YOU!

CLICK anywhere on this page to fill out the survey.

Tell us who, what breed, and most importantly, WHY!

Get creative! Your answers may be featured in an upcoming newsletter!



Kennel Gold Star Award

We are excited to announce that the very first Kennel Gold Star Award goes to Isabel Lee!



Congratulations, Isabel!

The Kennel Gold Star Award was created as a way to recognize students who go above and beyond during their kennel shifts.

The work students do in kennel plays an important role in caring for our animals and keeping things running smoothly! Taking initiative, being a great teammate, working hard, and helping make kennel a positive place are all things worth recognizing.

The Gold Star Award is our way of saying: We see your effort, and we appreciate you!



Q&A

SESSIONS WITH MRS. HOWELL



Have questions about kennel?
Come straight to the source!

Our Kennel Manager, Mrs. Howell, will be hosting six Kennel Q&A sessions on three different days to give everyone multiple opportunities to stop by.

This is your chance to ask questions about things like:
Kennel procedures and expectations
Why certain tasks are done a specific way
Tips for making your kennel shifts easier and more successful
Kennel leadership
Animal care and safety
Anything else you've been wondering about!



Session 1: Friday, 8/21
Session 2: Monday, 8/24
Session 3: Tuesday, 8/25
Times: 10:45 AM - 11:15 AM
and
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM
Location: Room 116



You do not need to attend all three sessions, just choose the one that works best for you!

Whether you have a specific question or just want to learn more about how kennel operates, you're welcome to stop by. This is a great opportunity to talk directly with Mrs. Howell, get clarification, and learn more about making the most of your time in kennel.

<<<< We hope to see you there! >>>>

Photos Around Campus



Nachos, games, and good company! Students from across several cohorts came together for some food, fun, and a little friendly competition at our latest housing event.



Above: 11DV25 students Macyn Patton, Allison Kunze, Arianna Smith, and Kelsey Bailey show off their nacho creations!



Above right: From left to right, Ethan Fleener (03DV26), Brynlee Gilbert (07DV25), Cadance Wilder (07DV25), Lexi Lloyd (03DV25), and Clayton Rodriguez (11DV25) enjoy a game of Apples to Apples together.



Right: 07DV25 roomies and besties Jacklyn Jackson, Cheyanne Black, and Makayla Anderson pose for a fun photo during the event.



Ms. Lewis, Mrs. Crocker, Mrs. Kleiman, and Mrs. Stout traded veterinary medicine for prehistoric medicine during a fun outing to see *Jurassic Park* at the Artcraft Theatre! 🦖

A couple of brave husbands and kiddos joined in on the adventure, too!



Photos Around Campus



Getting some hands-on time with a scaly classroom visitor!

11DV25 students had the opportunity to meet and hold Mrs. Dixon's snake during class.

Just another day of learning at VTI, where you never quite know who (or what!) might join you in the classroom!



07DV25 students practiced gowning up and scrubbing in, getting ready for surgery term!

Pictured right: Jacklyn Jackson, Makayla Anderson, and Cheyanne Black

"My favorite part of surgical nursing is learning how to properly care for an animal under anesthesia."
- Cheyanne Black



During Radiography I, 11DV25 students enjoyed giving extra pets to Bruce, all while learning how to perform an ultrasound.

Fun Fact:

Ultrasounds use sound waves to create real-time images of a dog's internal organs, no radiation needed!

Nothing like a night of basketball with a friend!

11DV25 student Kady Whitehead and her friend, Karma, enjoyed some time away from the classroom while cheering on the Indiana Fever.

We love seeing what our VTI students are up to outside of school!



Photos Around Campus



And the Roommate Awards go to... These four roommates had some fun voting on awards for one another and revealing the results! Lexi Lloyd (03DV25), Brynlee Gilbert (07DV25), Mia Myers (07DV25), and Cadance Wilder (07DV25) celebrated their roommate bond with plenty of laughs and some very personalized honors.

“We love living in housing so much that we obviously had to do roommate awards before our last term together!!!!” states Brynlee.



Putting their bird-handling skills to the test!

During avian skills, 11DV25 students practiced safely picking up and handling a chicken while also completing a physical examination.

Left: Burke Mills
Right: Kendall Hobbs

Fun fact:

Chickens can recognize more than 100 individual faces!



Photos Around Campus



A promise she'll carry with her.

07DV25 student Halle Sanders' newest tattoo represents her commitment to always advocate for her patients and provide them with the best care possible throughout her veterinary career.



Great minds dress alike!

07DV25 students DeAsia Gibson-Thomas and Mariana Williams were matching and bringing some extra color to VTI!



"Term 5 Exotics has been my favorite class throughout my time here. Thanks to Mrs.

Dixon and the incredible variety of animals, I've loved learning about each species. This class has inspired me to consider pursuing exotics, where I can work with unique animals, help them heal, and educate their owners."

- Sophia Stevens (11DV25)

Photo Credit: 11DV25 student Brianna Merceri

♥ In Loving Memory of Aliyah ♥

"She was a fabulous dog who really did just love everyone and was so eager to please."
- Claire Schofield (07DV25)



"She was always such a sweetheart."
- Allison Klodzen (03DV26)



This week, we said goodbye to a very special member of our VTI family.

Aliyah came to VTI at the beginning of this term and quickly found her way into the hearts of so many students, faculty, and staff. She was a sweet girl who was eager to please, loved attention, and had a way of brightening the day of those around her.

During her time with us, Aliyah was more than a patient. She was cared for, learned from, loved, and spoiled by so many members of our VTI community. She gave our students the opportunity to learn while also reminding us of one of the most meaningful, and sometimes most difficult, parts of veterinary medicine: caring deeply for the animals entrusted to us.



Following a significant decline in her health due to a chronic medical condition, Aliyah was rushed to the ER and the rescue she was visiting us from made the decision to humanely euthanize her on August 20. She was surrounded by people who advocated for her and made sure her comfort and quality of life came first.

Most importantly, Aliyah knew kindness and love during her time at VTI. Every person who fed her, walked her, cleaned up after her, worked with her, gave her a treat, scratched her ears, or simply stopped to say hello was a part of that.

Thank you, Aliyah, for everything you taught us and for all of the smiles you gave us along the way.



You were very loved, sweet girl. You will be missed.

"Aliyah loved sitting in people's laps."
- Jenna DeCoursey (11DV25)



"I would sit with her a lot and just study or read to her. We would snuggle or play with her toy. If someone couldn't find me, I was probably spending time with her.
Aliyah was so loved, and I find comfort in knowing that she was taken care of in her time here."
- Riley Packard (11DV25)





5 Songs On My Playlist Right Now



134340
BTS



Baile Inolvidable
Bad Bunny



Latina Foreva
Karol G



Aquel Nap ZzZz
Rauw Alejandro



Don't Go Insane
DPR IAN



Shared by:

Jessica Flores
(07DV25)

Click a song



to listen!

SHARE YOUR TOP 5 SONGS OF THE MOMENT!

It's a fun way to show off your music taste while helping classmates discover new songs, artists, and playlists they might end up loving too.

Whether your playlist is country, rock, pop, rap, throwbacks, study music, or a little bit of everything, we'd love to feature it in an upcoming newsletter.

Your feature will include:

- Your name and cohort
- Your top 5 songs
- Clickable links so others can listen too!

Please send Ashley:

- Your 5 songs + artists

We can't wait to see what everyone is listening to lately!

