

An interview with ANSC Majors
Christiana Fischer and Molly Viner regarding their
“California Field Studies in Veterinary Medicine & the Racehorse
Industry” Independent Study Course Experience
(California, January 2012)



Q: Where did you travel for this course, and when?

We participated in Dr. Milvae's travel independent study course titled "California Field Studies in Veterinary Medicine and the Racehorse Industry" from January 7-15, 2012. We shadowed two equine veterinarians, Dr. Joe Dowd at Hollywood Race Park and Dr. Ted Simpson at Santa Anita Race Park. We also went to Los Olivos, CA to tour the Alamo Pintado Equine Medical Center.

Q: How much did you have to pay for this course? What did you do there?

The total cost for this year's trip/class was \$6,450 and was paid by a combination of funding sources from Dr. Milvae (majority of funding), a College Scholarship, and the Department of Animal Science. Dr. Milvae's goal is to make this class affordable for all students who want to apply, hence, he absorbs most of the expenses so students do not have to. The only money we needed was for personal items we wanted to purchase.

We primarily shadowed Dr. Dowd and associate Dr. Ted Simpson on their daily rounds at either Santa Anita or Hollywood Park race tracks. Dr. Dowd took time to explain the logic, physiology,



options of his chosen plan of treatment, and expected outcomes. We spent a day at Alamo Pintado Vet Hospital—one of the most well known and prestigious equine hospitals in the world and we also toured the Platinum Performance factory, an equine supplement company, and met with the owner. We spent a lot of time interacting with several well known trainers such as Mike Mitchell, Doug O'Neill, and Mike Machowsky in order to learn more about the training/business aspects of the race horse world. We spent time

with the Santa Anita track vet, Dr. Stead, and was able to go with the official starter, Jay, to see the horses break from the starting gate (so cool). We met a number of jockeys, including Joe Talamo and Rafael Bejarano. We spent the end of the week at the races at Santa Anita and were able to get into the winner's circle 5 times because horses we had become familiar with over the week won!

Q: When did you apply for this course?

We applied for the independent study after receiving an email from the Department of Animal Science notifying us about this opportunity. We interviewed for the trip in early December and heard back right before Christmas break.

Q: How long did the internship last?

The independent study lasted 8 days.

Q: How did you learn about this opportunity?

There was an email sent from the Department of Animal Science (composed by Dr. Milvae) that had all of the information about the trip and the application process. We also were able to learn more about this opportunity via a presentation given by two students who went on the trip in the past.



Q: Anything else you'd like to add about your experience?

“I felt very fortunate to have been selected and I want to formally thank Dr. Milvae for the experience. It was an amazing experience and I had a lot of fun traveling through California and meeting the incredible animals and people of the race horse industry.” - Christiana Fischer

“The best experience I could have asked for! I had the most amazing time! I couldn't be more thankful to have a professor as generous or as awesome as Dr. Milvae. Thank you a million!”
- Molly Viner

Q: If someone has questions, can they contact either of you regarding your experience?

Yes! They can contact Christiana.Fischer@uconn.edu and/or Molly.Viner@uconn.edu

