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Press release : 2014 : 10 : 10 : Pre-Vet President Lands Guide Dogs Internship

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[Pre-Vet President Lands Guide Dogs Internship](#)

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USFSP Biology senior Bethany Porcelli runs Progesterone levels as part of her internship with Southeastern Guide Dogs.

This fall marks the first formal USFSP student internship with the Southeastern Guide Dogs (SEGD) organization. And Bethany Porcelli, president and founder of the USFSP Pre-Vet Society and a Biology senior, jumped at the chance to participate in this exciting new partnership.

“I applied to the Genetics and Reproduction internship because SEGD has a great reputation in the non-profit animal field,” said Porcelli. “They’re educating me about a field that I was unfamiliar with, while providing me with a career-furthering experience.”

As an intern for the Genetics and Reproduction Team, Porcelli goes through the intensive process of choosing a canine to be a “breeder,” or those with the best genes to create better guide dogs – good health and temperament, for example.

“I am able to get experience with basic veterinary skills, observe a variety of procedures and assist the Genetics and Reproduction team with a variety of assessments and routine medical testing,” Porcelli said.

“Bethany’s experiences at Southeastern Guide Dogs will be invaluable to her as she pursues her future career in veterinary medicine,” said Dr. Norine Noonan, Biology professor and internship faculty advisor. “This is exactly the kind of relevant experience that we both encourage and facilitate for USFSP students.”

“I’m really grateful to Bethany for founding the Pre-Vet Society and blazing a new trail for our Biology students,” said Dr. Frank Biafora, dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. “I couldn’t be more proud of her achievements and opening the door for others.”

The internship is preparing Porcelli for extensive experience as she enters veterinary school after graduating from USFSP. Once she receives her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine, she plans to focus her career on wildlife medicine.

The SEG’s mission is to create and nurture a partnership between a visually impaired individual and a guide dog, facilitating life’s journey with mobility, independence and dignity. Their main facility is located in Palmetto, FL, off Interstate 275, on a sprawling 35-acre campus. There is also an outreach center and dog boutique located in downtown St. Petersburg, to increase visibility. www.guidedogs.org.