



RMTC Racing Industry Veterinary Student Externship Program

Background:

The success of the racing industry is dependent on the recruitment, availability, and retention of motivated attending and regulatory veterinary professionals to oversee the safety and welfare of its participants. In response, the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) has created a *Racing Industry Veterinary Student Externship Program* to financially support veterinary student's externships with racetrack private practicing and regulatory veterinarians.

The RMTC, a 501(c)(3) scientifically based organization, serves research, educational, and advocacy roles within the horseracing industry providing a unique platform for industry stakeholder collaboration on matters of horseracing safety and integrity. It is governed by a board of directors from 23 racing stakeholder organizations including representatives of Thoroughbred, Standardbred, Quarter Horse and Arabian Horse racing. Tax deductible contributions support research and educational programs. For additional information, visit the RMTC website at rmtccnet.com.

Description:

This externship program is designed to provide prospective veterinarians with exposure to, gain experience in, and develop networking opportunities in equine veterinary medicine within the racing industry. Due to the regulated nature of horseracing and standards of practice for both practicing and regulatory veterinarians working on the racetrack, this experience will be observational with limited hands-on opportunities, however, it provides an optimal environment for students to observe and participate in large diverse caseloads. Students will get an interactive viewpoint of the day-to-day responsibilities of the practicing veterinarian during training hours and while racing which includes the opportunity to observe and discuss progressive diagnostics, including advanced imaging modalities, internal medicine practices, and therapies for the racehorse. Additionally, students will receive one-on-one exposure to the unique responsibilities of racing regulatory veterinarians, which include pre-race, veterinary list, and out-of-competition examinations, training observations, risk assessment strategies, on-track racing duties, and injury management.

Expectations:

The RMTC will provide financial support of up to \$2,000 for veterinary student(s) participating in a racetrack externship. The externship must consist of a 2-week minimum shared experience spending half of the time accompanying a racetrack practice/practicing veterinarian and half of the time with a racing regulatory veterinarian. The RMTC will organize a *pool* of host racetrack practitioners/practices and regulatory veterinarians willing to collaborate with this program. RMTC's externship selection committee will review, rank, and match applicants with host-sites. The externship must be completed within one year of the award date, or graduation. Upon completion, the applicant will be required to complete an exit review of the externship. Students previously awarded this externship will not qualify for subsequent



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program funding, however RMTC is committed to assisting with arranging additional racetrack-specific veterinary student externships.

The applicant must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that of a veterinary professional. He/she will honor all expectations of confidentiality by each host site. The student should expect up to seven days per week experience unless otherwise arranged with the hosting site. Due to the regulated nature of horseracing, students must receive permission from the hosting veterinarian to have physical contact with or take pictures of any horse on the backside of the racetrack or training center. In the event the externship is not completed, the applicant must provide proof of mitigating circumstance, otherwise funding reimbursement to the RMTC will be required.

Important Dates

Application Deadline: 6 pm EST Monday, November 16, 2026

Notification of award: Monday, January 11, 2027



Application

i. Applicant Information

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

ii. Education

Undergraduate College Attended:

Veterinary School Attending:

Projected Year of Graduation:

iii. Experience

Briefly list your previous horse experience, if any (you have worked with race horses, foals, riding horses, etc.), and if you have had any experience as a technician or assistant in school or elsewhere. *Note: Experience with horses or previous exposure to the racing industry is not a requirement for eligibility with this externship.*

iv. Required Submission(s)

All applicants must submit the following materials in addition to the application to complete the application process.

1. Letter of Intent (*Note: Exposure and experience in racing is not a requirement*)
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. Proof of AVMA PLIT student insurance policy.
4. *Three (3) Letters of Recommendation (which are to be submitted with application packet).*
 - a. *One (1) letter of recommendation from a Veterinary School faculty member affirming the applicant's interest in racetrack experience.*
 - b. *Two (2) other letters of recommendation from professional references.*



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v. Applicant's Host-Site Selection

Instructions - Applicants are to rank their top three preferred host-sites by racing jurisdiction/state (see *Description of Externship Host Sites*). The RMTC and its selection committee will match applicants with host-sites based on the information available. Please review the host site descriptions and indicate your preferred host-site(s) below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Note: If you have already committed to a racetrack specific externship in 2024 and would like to apply for the RMTC Racing Industry Veterinary Student Externship funding please indicate in the space provided here. _____ (Yes/No).

If yes, please include contact information for externship host site.

vi. Preferred Date(s)

Instructions – Please indicate dates available for the externship. The information provided will assist the selection committee in matching applicants with host site.

Date(s):

Note – Upon award notification, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the host-site to schedule the date(s) of the externship.



FAQs

1. Does the practice or the externship provide housing or transportation?

A: No, although host site mentors may be able to give recommendations on travel and housing, it will be up to the students to make their own arrangements.

2. What should I wear at the track?

A: Business casual attire often worn when working around horses. Recommend jeans/khakis; polo type or button-down shirt; closed toed shoes.

3. What time does the day start and where will I meet you?

A: This will be determined by your host site mentor but, likely to be somewhere between 5:00am and 7:00am.

4. What time does the day end?

A: The length of the workday will depend on whether that day is scheduled for live racing and arrangements made with your host site mentor.

5. Should I pack lunch?

A: You should bring snacks, water, etc. for your personal needs, and discuss arrangements for lunch with your host site mentor.

6. Should I bring anything?

A: Students are encouraged to bring a stethoscope and their formulary.

7. Can I get academic credit through my university?

A: This will depend on the requirements of the university you are attending.

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8. Will I be performing any procedures?

A: This experience will be observational with limited hands-on opportunities, depending on environment and circumstances, however you will be exposed to a large caseload with significant amount of lameness exams and diagnostic approaches. Students must receive permission from host site mentors to have physical contact or take pictures of horses.

9. What will my day look like?

A: Typical days include lameness, prerace, or soundness examinations; imaging; endoscopic exams; exams on horses that have illnesses; preventive medicine; minor surgical procedures; emergencies as they may arise.

10. Who do I contact if I am late, sick or have a conflict?

A: Students should contact their host site mentor scheduled for that day.



Host Site Description(s)

California – Santa Anita Park, DelMar, Los Alamitos

California offers year-round live racing at one of its three Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racetracks. Santa Anita Park, located in Arcadia California, hosts live Thoroughbred racing starting the end of December through mid-June, in addition to a short meet in October. DelMar Racing, located in Del Mar California, hosts live Thoroughbred racing from mid-July through the first week of September and the month of November. Los Alamitos conducts live horse racing on a year-round basis, primarily featuring nighttime Quarter Horse racing.

Delaware/Maryland – Delaware Park

Delaware Park, located in Wilmington Delaware, hosts live Thoroughbred racing from mid-May to mid-October. The hosting racetrack private practice is based at Fair Hill Training Center which provides veterinary services to Thoroughbred racehorses at both Fair Hill and Delaware Park.

Florida – Gulfstream Park

Gulfstream Park, located in Hallandale Beach Florida, hosts year-round live Thoroughbred racing and training. Gulfstream Park is supported by three local training centers, Payson Park Thoroughbred Training Center, Palm Meadows Training Center, and Palm Beach Downs Training Center.

Indiana – Horseshoe Indianapolis

Horseshoe Indianapolis, located in Shelbyville Indiana, hosts a split race meet consisting of live Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing from mid-April through mid-November. This host would prefer the externships take place during the summer months.

Iowa – Prairie Meadows

Prairie Meadows, located in Altoona Iowa, hosts a split race meet consisting of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse live racing from end of May through the beginning of September. The hosting veterinary practice is a Midwest based racetrack practice that services Prairie Meadows during the summer months.



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Kentucky – Turfway Park, Keeneland, Churchill Downs, Ellis Park, Kentucky Downs, Oak Grove, Red Mile, Sandy Ridge

Kentucky offers year-round live racing at its Thoroughbred, Standardbred and Quarter Horse racetracks.

Maryland – Laurel Park

Laurel Park, located in Laurel Maryland, hosts live Thoroughbred racing January through June and from September through December.

New York – Belmont Park, Saratoga

New York Racing Association hosts live Thoroughbred racing at New York's two major tracks Belmont Park, and Saratoga Race Course. The newly imagined Belmont Park will offer live racing throughout 2027 except during the Saratoga meet. The Saratoga Race Course hosts live racing mid-July through Labor Day.

Virginia – Colonial Downs

Colonial Downs, located in New Kent Virginia, hosts Thoroughbred racing scheduled from late June through first week of September. It also hosts National Steeplechase Association racing with two races scheduled one day weekly.

Washington – Emerald Downs

Emerald Downs, located in Auburn Washington, hosts a 55-day live Thoroughbred race season scheduled from early May through mid-September.