

Home from college for Thanksgiving, Caitlin Moore decided to make her beloved pony a special holiday treat of bran mash, carrots, and apples.

Lady Luck ate too fast, and choked. Moore called every veterinarian in the area that morning. None returned her calls.

A biology major in her junior year at the University of Maryland, Moore was interested in medicine, but was uncertain about whether she should pursue the human or veterinary field.

“That was the day I decided to pursue veterinary medicine for sure,” said Moore, now in her fourth year at Penn Vet. “In that moment I thought, ‘I am never going to do this to someone.’ No matter what, I’m going to be there for my clients.”

Lady Luck was true to her name and managed to hang on, coughing all day until a vet came to the farm that night. The vet passed a nasogastric tube and poured mineral oil down the pony’s esophagus to dislodge the obstruction.

“I’m seeing the other side now that I’m in vet school. I understand clients will call you at any hour, and every time they call it may not be essential,” Moore continued. “But I just remember feeling so helpless that day.”

Growing up in Carroll County, Maryland, on a farm owned by her family for generations, Moore had always worked with animals. She started riding at eight years old and wanted a pony “more than anything else.” Her parents said she would have to earn the money for that pony. So she did, raising market lambs in 4-H and selling them at the county fair.

Moore bought the mare, a bay Exmoor-Dartmoor cross, at auction, with the \$1,000 she earned from the lambs. And she developed a deep devotion to her “forever pony,” which she still has today on the family farm, along with her off-the-track Thoroughbred jumper, Rocinante.

Moore shadowed vets in high school, riding along on the weekends. A volunteer with Carroll County Therapeutic Riding Program, she worked with kids, parents, and horses. She even visited Penn Vet, and caught a glimpse of the famous patient, racehorse *Barbaro*.

But she was “dead set against Penn” when considering vet schools, applying only because her mother insisted. “I was a country girl who didn’t want to live in Philadelphia,” she said.

On the day of her interview she toured New Bolton Center with Dr. Eric Parente. “By the end of the day I knew this is where I wanted to be,” she said. “It was a sense of belonging I had not had in any other place.”

Following her acceptance to Penn, she was awarded an Opportunity Scholarship, which provided financial aid and also paired her with mentor Dr. Patricia Sertich, V’83, Associate Professor of Reproduction at New Bolton Center.

After Moore’s first year in vet school, Sertich arranged for her to volunteer at the Brandywine Polo Club and to collaborate on a research project with Internal Medicine’s Dr. Rose Nolen-Walston.

The project researched how clenbuterol affects muscle mass in the horse. Moore administered clenbuterol to the polo ponies, and measured the fat on their rumps using ultrasound to assess their change in percent body fat. The data culminated in a publication in the *American Journal of Veterinary Research* and presentation of the project at a national conference.

“Dr. Sertich has set me up for success,” Moore said. “She’s been amazing.”

One of her favorite nights of vet school was at New Bolton Center on March 29, 2014, when mare *My Special Girl* gave birth to the colt, *Boone*, with the world watching on the live feed from Penn Vet’s Foal Cam.

“I can’t believe I got so lucky,” she said. “My parents were watching on the Foal Cam. We were doing our nightly checks and I told Dr. Emily Setlakwe, ‘I think she is in stage one,’ and sure enough, she was.”

Encouraged by Sertich, Moore spent summer 2014 at Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital in Kentucky for the vet-shadowing program. Following graduation this spring, Moore will work as a rotating intern at Mid-Atlantic Equine Medical Center in Ringoes, New Jersey. “It was again one of these things that felt so right. I knew I didn’t want to be anywhere else,” she said.

Moore said she envisions a career in equine internal medicine. “Most people don’t get to say they can do their dream job, and I do,” she said.



CAITLIN
Moore
Penn Vet Class of 2016

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