
MAKING PENNSYLVANIA PROUD

MEET THE RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL COMMONWEALTH ONE HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

BY LOUISA SHEPARD

Allyson Anderson and Amy Kraus met in a farm animal reproduction class at Penn State. Now, they are both members of Penn Vet's Class of 2019.

The two Penn State graduates, both from small towns in rural Pennsylvania, intended to pursue veterinary careers caring for livestock and farm animals, specifically dairy cows. They were leaning toward out-of-state schools including Cornell, Wisconsin, and Purdue.

But then came the call from Penn Vet admissions: Would you reconsider if you received a full scholarship to cover the tuition?

In that case, yes.

Recognizing potential to the School, to the veterinary profession, and to Pennsylvania agriculture, the Commonwealth One Health Scholarship provides students a full tuition subsidy, at \$50,000 a year, for four years at Penn Vet—Pennsylvania's only veterinary school.

The School has allocated scholarship funds for the Commonwealth One Health Scholarship, which specifically targets Pennsylvania residents who have demonstrated a genuine interest in livestock medicine and plan to practice in Pennsylvania.

"Allyson and Amy were selected from a group of highly competitive applicants, and

we look forward to watching them proudly serve Pennsylvania's agriculture industry," said Penn Vet Dean Joan Hendricks. "We are thrilled to offer an array of scholarships to recruit the best and brightest to Penn Vet, and decrease the burden of student debt."

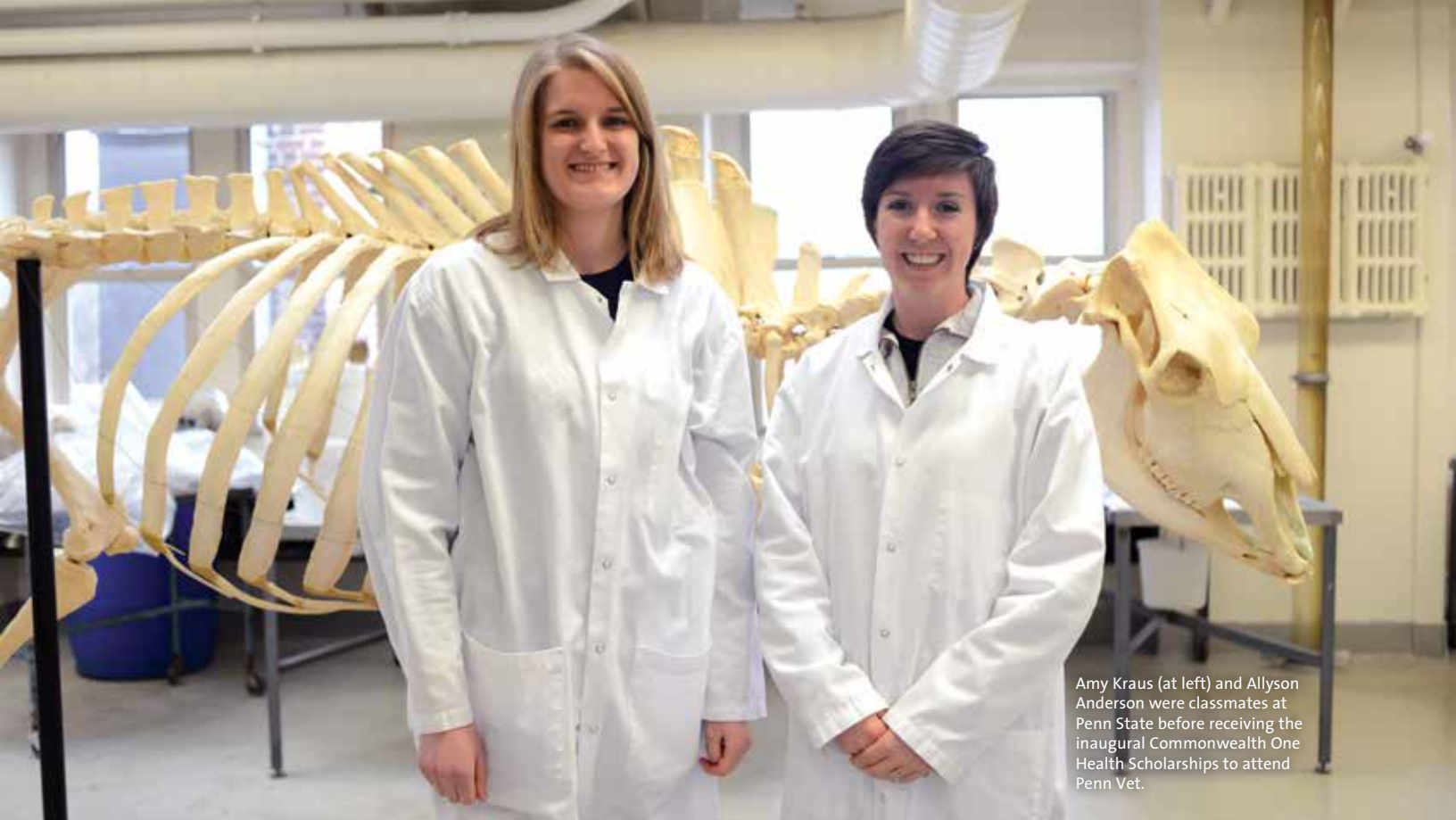
ALLYSON ANDERSON

Coudersport is a tight-knit town of about 2,500 people in north central Pennsylvania's Potter County. Allyson Anderson's grandparents operated a dairy farm there, eventually dividing the land among their children, including her parents.

"All my parents' siblings live within a half hour," said Anderson, 22. "My mom's maiden name was Long, and we live on Long Road."

Crazy about horses, Anderson started to ride when she was seven years old. Her dad put up miles of fence for her horses, including a Quarter Horse named Flash, which she showed 4-H riding Western. Her mom would help her take care of them, and her farmer cousin would throw off hay when he went by with the truck, no charge.

"I am so thankful for the giant support system I have with my family," Anderson said.



Amy Kraus (at left) and Allyson Anderson were classmates at Penn State before receiving the inaugural Commonwealth One Health Scholarships to attend Penn Vet.

Although she always wanted to be a veterinarian, she decided to pursue a degree in chemical engineering, going her freshman year to the Rochester Institute of Technology. But she couldn't let go of her dream of working with animals, and transferred to Penn State to pursue a degree in veterinary and biomedical sciences with the intention of applying to veterinary school.

During those undergraduate years she worked weekends and summers at a dairy, Rissdale Farm. "I fed the calves and took care of them, gave them their injections and medications right after they were born," she said, adding that she also "milked and scraped manure, those less-glorious jobs."

Anderson graduated a semester early and worked at the family's mill, Elliott Lumber Co. Undecided, with a noon deadline looming, she emailed Penn Vet's admissions department to say no, she was not interested in coming for an interview. On her next break from running a chop saw, she saw several missed calls from Mac Keiter, Penn Vet's former Associate Dean for Admissions. When she called back, he told her about the scholarship.

"Mac was very helpful, and very welcoming," she said.

Even though she was "terrified" of Philadelphia, Anderson also reconsidered Penn Vet when her mentor, Dr. Sally Fowler, encouraged her to apply. "When I interviewed I was so glad I saw New Bolton Center. It is very impressive," she said. "I knew I could manage if I could be out there some of the time."

Anderson is more than managing. The former Allyson Elliott was married last summer to Dustin Anderson, and the couple lives in Exton, Pennsylvania, with their chocolate Labrador, Mayah, and Tuxedo kitten, Brandi. She takes the train into Philadelphia for classes during the week, and spends some weekends at New Bolton Center with the Food Animal Club.

The Andersons plan to return to Coudersport once she graduates, and she expects to work in a practice with an emphasis on large animals. "I am definitely committed to food-animal medicine," Anderson said, noting that she is especially interested in dairy reproduction.

Her only concern about being a woman in livestock medicine is her diminutive, five-foot-four-inch frame. "I'll be standing on a lot of milk crates," she said, laughing.

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—Amy Kraus

(Pictured above) Amy Kraus, at right, was photographed working at New Bolton Center’s Marshak Dairy with Dr. Meggan Hain, Staff Veterinarian in Field Service.

(Pictured at right) Allyson Anderson, at right, also collaborates with Hain at Marshak Dairy.

AMY KRAUS

Living in the middle of two dairy farms definitely influenced Amy Kraus, who grew up in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, near the Ohio border in rural Beaver County outside of Pittsburgh.

Neighbor Ed Brunton, who owns one of the few dairies that still bottles its own milk and runs a home delivery service, taught her how to milk cows.

“In preschool I knew I wanted to have a job working with animals,” Kraus said, adding that her grandfather was a dairy farmer, who left the family farm to work in Pennsylvania’s steel mills. “My parents say it must be in my genetics.”

Kraus showed her Quarter Horse, Hop Scotch, in 4-H, and her high school senior career project was veterinary medicine.

In the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State, she pursued a degree in animal science and completed a thesis in metabolomics. This is a relatively new field focused on studying the small molecules left behind in biofluids such as milk and urine. She analyzed equine urine, looking at biomarkers for gastrointestinal damage, which can be related to colic, laminitis, and equine metabolic syndrome. While working at the Penn State Dairy Barns, she also assisted in nutrition research trials to study milk fat depression.

Kraus was a member of Penn State’s championship teams in the National

Collegiate Beef Quiz Bowl and the American Dairy Science Association Quiz Bowl. “I was usually in charge of knowing facts about disease, nutrition, and reproduction in cattle,” she said.

During spring break her junior year, Kraus participated in an externship at New Bolton Center, shadowing Dr. Raymond Sweeney, Chief of Medicine, and fourth-year students.

“I saw a down cow floated in an Aqua Cow for the first time,” she said. “I really loved all the professors. It was so interesting to see the advanced procedures and options available.”

Even though she had scholarship offers from other vet schools, and had canceled her Penn Vet interview, a call from Keiter about the full scholarship changed her mind.

“I’m excited to be at Penn,” said Kraus, 23. “I think Pennsylvania has a great climate for raising dairy cattle, and I would love to stay in Pennsylvania to promote our own dairy industry.”

Kraus said she is firmly committed to working in dairy and plans to pursue an internship in dairy reproduction this summer.

“I am thinking of working for an all-dairy practice to gain practical experience in the field, and then perhaps pursuing a residency and conducting research,” she said, adding, “Maybe I will teach at a veterinary school someday.”