



SITTING BULL COLLEGE EXPANDS DEGREE OFFERINGS

A new program launched at Sitting Bull College (SBC) in Fort Yates will offer an opportunity for students to channel their aptitude with animals into a career, the college is adding a program to train veterinary technicians. SBC has an approved curriculum and is now seeking a full-time vet tech director and veterinarian instructor as teaching staff before launching the program. "Once those are staffed, we can start," said Joe Dunn, director of the Agriculture Division at SBC. The goal is to start the program in the fall semester of 2022. "There's a great demand in the veterinary services industry for veterinarians and vet techs," Dunn said. "When we were originally designing the program, we thought we would move in the direction where our students who complete the program could move into a veterinary science program to get their doctor of veterinary medicine."

Students can also move directly into a job as a vet tech after completing the program. "I think it's a really good program, because there's such a demand for veterinarians all over the nation," Dunn said. There's a lot of interest from the local community, because we're in farm-and-ranch country and people are hands-on and like animals." The program will offer an associate degree as a veterinarian technician in approximately two years. "There's been interest in a veterinarian program here for some time. A couple of years ago, we did a survey of high school seniors here on Standing Rock and the surrounding area and we came up with about an 85% positivity rate for demand for that program," Dunn said. Classes range from intro to vet technology, to anatomy, physiology and microbiology, to diagnostic imaging to care for small, large, and exotic animals, for a total of 91 credits. Curriculum was approved last spring and is designed to apply for accreditation from the American veterinary Medical Association, Dunn said.



The college plans to start construction this spring of a facility for the Agriculture Division to support the program. The new agriculture center will be a 40x90 facility with two classroom spaces, office spaces, and a shop. It will house the Agriculture Division personnel and provide classroom space for the vet tech program.

This fall, SBC collaborated with the Rural Veterinary Experience Teaching and Service (RVETS), which is a nonprofit headquartered out of Dixon, CA., to provide a five-day equine clinic at the SBC arena by Prairie Knights Casino Sept. 28-Oct. 2.

Dr. Tarek Isham, DVM; Dr. Jamie White, DVM; and Betsy Lordan, DVM, CJF; delivered equine veterinary services and a three-day farrier clinic. SBC students assisted with castrations, dental floats hoof trims and other procedures. Lordan provided farrier presentations and discussion, along with hands-on training. Participants learned basic hoof trimming and horseshoeing techniques during the farrier clinic.

RVETS provides services to underserved rural communities in the United States and abroad, and has brought equine services to the community annually. One of the vets also helped develop the curriculum for the vet tech program.

"We have been providing veterinary care workshops throughout the year to try to maintain interest in the program," Dunn said.

RVETS is open to anyone with an interest. "Anyone that has an interest can come and learn," he said. This fall, about 50 horses were brought to the event. "The workshop itself is a community service," he said, and will help promote the vet tech program until the classes begin.

For more information regarding the vet tech program, contact Dunn at (701)854-8068 or email joe.dunn@sittingbull.edu.