Resident Training in Veterinary Clinical Pathology

Skin lesion, imprint (dog): pyogranulomatous inflammation with Blastomyces yeasts

Program Overview and Caseload Diversity

The School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison) offers a 3-year resident-training program for graduate veterinarians in clinical pathology. The goal of this program is to provide diverse learning opportunities to prepare individuals for a career in veterinary clinical pathology and complete the requirements for certification by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP).

The training program utilizes learning opportunities from classroom, seminar, and rounds instruction along with clinical casework. Residents have access to a diverse diagnostic caseload in domestic large and small animals and special species from the University of Wisconsin Veterinary Care (UWVC) hospital, with occasional submissions from Henry Vilas Zoo, International Crane Foundation, Wisconsin National Primate Research Center, and specialty clinics. Your resident cohort in pathology includes a second clinical pathology resident and four anatomic pathology residents.

The UWVC Clinical Pathology Laboratory performs analysis in hematology (Advia 2120), chemistry (Vitros 4600), coagulation (STA Compact and Haemonetics TEG), blood gas and point-of-care (Radiometer and AlphaTRAK), endocrinology and drug testing (Immulite 2000), cytology (including evaluating and reporting immunocytochemical staining for immunophenotyping of canine lymphoma), urinalysis and parasitology, blood typing and cross matches, and other selected tests. The adjacent microbiology service for the hospital, led by a highly skilled and knowledgeable microbiologist, utilizes the most up-to-date methods for microbial identification (MALDI-TOF). The laboratory is staffed by a dedicated team of medical technologists supplemented by certified veterinary technicians, medical laboratory technicians, and other staff with an interest in laboratory procedures.

Training Focus: Diagnostic and Teaching Excellence & Seminar-Based Learning

At the core of the residency program is rigorous one-on-one mentorship with board-certified clinical pathologists in assessment of clinical cases through the first two years of the residency. Residents are expected to transition to independence on clinical duty during the third year of residency with a senior pathologist always available for consultation. Residents also participate in the instruction of second-year veterinary medical students in laboratory sessions and attend or deliver lectures in the clinical pathology course. Residents also mentor fourth year veterinary medical students in the clinical pathology elective or during one-on-one directed studies in the diagnostic laboratory. A dedicated seminar for clinical pathology mentors and trainees occurs on a weekly basis and rotates through focused discussions of relevant topics, real-time evaluation of hematology and cytology slides, and interpretation of comprehensive case data. Adjunct to their training, residents also participate in an array of seminars and rounds with other services such as surgical biopsy rounds and monthly joint rounds with small animal internal medicine. Residents are encouraged to
participate in clinical research projects with mentors in the pathology program or in one of the other clinical or basic science programs. Opportunities to present the results of clinical research projects or unique clinical cases are available through departmental seminars and grand rounds. In addition, residents participate in a faculty-led general pathology study group to help prepare for the ACVP Phase I examination and prepare write-ups of slides, images, and cases selected by mentors in preparation for the Phase II ACVP certifying examination. Residents receive dedicated weeks free from clinical duty to prepare for these milestone events.

Leukocytozoon in a domestic duck

ACVP Board-Certified Clinical Pathology Mentors

Kristen R Friedrichs, DVM, Diplomate, ACVP
Clinical Associate Professor
Diagnostic clinical pathology with interests in cytology of cancer, cancer biomarkers, immunocytochemistry, quality laboratory practices, reference interval determination, and teaching clinical reasoning

Nina C Zitzer, DVM, PhD, Diplomate, ACVP
Clinical Assistant Professor
Diagnostic clinical pathology with interests in diagnostic flow cytometry, hematopoietic neoplasia, immune-mediated diseases, and mentorship of residents and veterinary students

Allison Dusick, DVM, Diplomate, ACVP
Clinical Instructor
Diagnostic clinical pathology with interests in training of veterinary students, laboratory management and quality assurance, and clinical pathology of large animals and exotics

Application for Admission

Applicants must possess the DVM/VMD or equivalent degree and be eligible for Wisconsin licensure. Applicants should send a letter of intent and career goals, curriculum vitae, official transcript from the veterinary program, and the names and contact information of three referees to the email contact listed below. Reference letters should be requested by the applicant and sent directly from each referee to the email contact listed below. Applications are due early in October for the position starting mid-August. Current positions are listed at www.ASVCP.org

In some years, the US Department of Labor and Homeland Security has informed us that due to ongoing prevailing wage concerns, we are unable to accept foreign nationals into our program. We work actively with the Secretary of Homeland Security each year to resolve this issue, and last year we were able to accept foreign nationals, assuming visa requirements were met. Should you decide to apply to our program, you will be kept apprised of the status of this issue.

Send application materials by email to:
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