



For all my life, my career aspiration was to work in the agricultural field, specifically to be a veterinarian. I loved working with animals at Celestial Farms or interacting with them at places like Gatorland. My passion to work with animals was very high and seeing how there was a lack of vets for exotic animals made me want to become a vet myself. Someone has to fill those shoes; dogs and cats are not the only animals who need care. For my internship, I was placed at Riverside Animal Hospital.

While working at Riverside Animal Hospital, I learned many skills. Firstly, I learned how to hold a dog and hold off a vein. You have to give the dog a hug but hold its head toward your shoulder so it doesn't bite the person giving it injections, vaccines, or drawing blood. Next, to hold off a vein, you have to grab the arm and roll it. It's in a specific spot on the dog, but after doing it twice I got the hang of it. Next, I learned how to scruff and hold certain animals. The scruff is fur on the neck of an animal that is fatty or loose. Grabbing an animal by the scruff can be useful, even if it sounds cruel. This worked great when I had to get a cat or hold a ferret. Lastly, I learned how to run a fecal test. It was gross but everyone had to do it. First, you have to get the fecal and then put it in a tube with a specific liquid and a filter. After that, the tube gets spun around in a fecal centrifuge before going into a tester device which goes into another machine for reading. Fecal testing took around twenty minutes and sometimes the results were not good. No one wants to find out their dog has hookworms. These are only a few examples of some of the skills I learned and the tasks I did at Riverside.

Without the AnnieRuth Foundation, I wouldn't have gotten this opportunity. However, this opportunity has already helped me in the future when I apply to medical school. Entering vet school is very competitive. To get in, you must stand out; you can't just make good grades and hope to get in. Schools look at your experiences and this experience was a good one to add to my résumé. The reviewers from the college will see that I have worked at a veterinary clinic before, which is impressive. In another way, if I cannot achieve my goal of being a vet, future employers may see this experience as a green flag. I plan to work in the animal field, even if I don't become a vet, so working at Riverside Animal Hospital through the AnnieRuth Foundation will definitely help me find future employment.