

Katherine's Journey

“Although my path wasn't straight, it was purposeful, and I believe that every step I took prepared me for where I am today. Getting accepted into and attending the AVC program has been a goal of mine since grade 12. That being said, it was always an incredibly intimidating concept for me both academically and personally. I'm the type of person to thrive on obtaining a goal that I know is out of reach but achievable with the right amount of hard work and dedication. Therefore, every part of this journey required me to step out of my comfort zone, alter my personal life to preface success in my future, and most importantly, not give up on myself or my goals.

With a passion for both science and psychology, as well as the competitiveness of the AVC program, I knew that I had to keep my options open and majored in both subjects. I ultimately wanted to receive an acceptance into AVC, but I knew I needed a 'Plan B' to fall back on as well. This involved a lot of talking to my peers and mentors, researching alternative professions, and essentially preparing myself for the windiest path possible (always prepare for the worst and hope for the best hahaha).

I was back and forth between filling out AVC and nursing applications for the second time, volunteering in the mental health field and animal hospitals, and researching psychology master's programs. As anyone who has applied for a competitive program knows, the process of getting rejected and having to try again can be disheartening. However, it proved how much I wanted to attend AVC and motivated me to keep trying.

As you can imagine, my head was on a swivel with so many possibilities during this time. It was funny because when I'd mention these plans to other people, many would ask which one I wanted to choose, and it wasn't until my first year in the AVC program that I realized I didn't have to! So much of client communication and advocating for animal welfare and rights involves being equipped with the skills I learned in my psychology major. Not to mention, it indirectly helped me understand animal behaviour a little more, as it often reflects that of their owners.



After almost completing my second year of the program, I have never been so proud of myself. AVC has not only given me opportunities to learn from incredible doctors and classmate but has also provided me with lots of hands-on experiences to uncover my admiration for practicing medicine.

This year, a newer and eye-opening experience for me was volunteering during the lambing and foaling seasons. I got to work with several premature babies, who required around-the-clock care to ensure their health improved. My role was to check and update their vital signs, provide nourishment, and alleviate physical discomfort with physiotherapy and administering fluids and medications. I plan to continue volunteering in the large animal hospital, as it will broaden my understanding and confidence in caring for large animals compassionately and effectively.

Each semester continues to connect more puzzle pieces, helping me to see the bigger picture of what my professional career will look like. In attempts to absorb as much as I can in this four-year journey, I hope to compile these skills to become an impactful and personable veterinarian who clients trust to provide care to their fur-babies.

I acknowledge that I still have so much to learn to become the best veterinarian I can be. In addition, I plan to continue expanding my interest in science and psychology by continuing my education in animal behavior research.

Lastly, I would like to say a huge thank you to my amazing support system, who truly believed I could achieve any of my goals and have been by my side throughout the whole journey. No matter how windy my road is, it's the people standing by me at each turn that have helped me continue on my way. I would like to thank my mom (Jane), dad (Steve), brother and sister-in-law (Matt and Dayna), my very best friends (Emily and Daphne), my family around the Atlantic provinces and my incredible mentors, classmates, and professors. I'd also like to thank my one-of-a-kind dog Alfie who, like my other pets over the years, has been a source of comfort, a lifeline and a person's best friend."

