



**Best Western Inn & Suites Conference
Center**

November 16-18, 2018

Waynesboro, Virginia

Sponsored by:

The Wildlife Center of Virginia and

The Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

NOVEMBER 2018

**Welcome to the Wildlife Center of Virginia's 23rd
Call of the Wild conference on wildlife rehabilitation!**

We're glad to see so many people join us for this year's conference on wildlife rehabilitation. This year we're excited to see many new faces in the crowd – rehabilitators from many other states joining us for the first time and several individuals just beginning their careers in wildlife rehabilitation. Of course, we're always happy to see those dedicated veterans who participate year after year and make this event such a success!

The more people who come, the more great ideas, knowledge, and experience there are in one place. Take advantage of this fact and mingle! In addition to our many attendees this year, we have some truly fantastic speakers who have traveled to share their experience. From species-specific rehabilitation talks to broader discussions about conservation efforts and education, there is something here for everyone.

Please be sure to fill out your evaluation – the comments and answers you provide will help us plan next year's conference. The conference is designed for **you**, and we want to hear what you want! We hope you enjoy this excellent learning opportunity and return home inspired to continue the great work you do!

Again, thank you for your participation in the *Call of the Wild* 2018.

-The Staff of the Wildlife Center of Virginia



FRIDAY

9:00 am - 3:30 pm — BAT REHABILITATION WORKSHOP

in the Blue Ridge Ballroom LEFT

This all-day bat training includes the principles of wildlife rehabilitation; natural history of North American bats, including identification; intake and assessment information, focusing on feeding techniques, hydration, and pain management; diagnostics; appropriate housing; diseases, including an update on White Nose Syndrome; and a diagnostic lab with carcass handling practice for those with proof of rabies vaccination.

Leslie Sturges, lucysbatmail@gmail.com

10:00 am - 3:00 pm — VETERINARY TRAINING COURSE

At the Wildlife Center of Virginia

This five-hour session for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and veterinary assistants is taught by the Center's veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians. The training addresses specific skills needed for triaging wild animals, including handling/restraint, radiographs, ophthalmic examinations, and avian bandaging. Discussion includes triage decision-making in common wildlife scenarios and reporting of wildlife to appropriate agencies and governing bodies. The session also includes a tour of the Wildlife Center so that participants can see the hospital, as well as the diagnostic equipment used in daily treatments.

Peach Van Wick, DVM, pvanwick@wildlifecenter.org

WILDLIFE CARE ACADEMY CLASSES

8:00 am - 10:00 am

REHAB 203: Wildlife Rehabilitation Fundamentals

in Blue Ridge Ballroom RIGHT

Interested in rehabilitating wildlife? Discussion will include an examination of the Virginia permitting process, with a focus on helping the new rehabilitator decide which species s/he would like to and can rehabilitate. The class will also include the who, what, when, where, and why of setting up a home rehabilitation room/facility, and will include information on stocking the appropriate equipment and supplies. The importance of natural history will be emphasized, and attendees will learn how to develop an animal nutrition plan. Finally, the class will examine the rehabilitation processes of an infant mammal and nestling songbird, from birth to release. Our case-study approach makes learning about wildlife rehabilitation fun and practical for the beginner!

Brie Hashem, bhashem@wildlifecenter.org

MGT 212: Your True Cost of Doing Business

in Rockfish/Afton

When an organization is asked about the size of its operations in financial terms, the typical answer is the amount of cash expended in a year's time, which almost always underestimates the actual costs and the true value of the organization's programs and services. This class will help organizations accurately determine the actual value of their work, which can be critical for public relations, fundraising, and truly understanding the benefits your organization delivers to its community. You will be surprised!

Ed Clark, eclark@wildlifecenter.org

10:10 am - 12:10 pm

REHAB 304: Small Mammal Rehabilitation

in Blue Ridge Ballroom RIGHT

Raising orphaned small mammals is a great place for the new rehabilitator to start! This class is a basic introduction to hand-rearing orphaned small mammals from birth to release. Three species commonly admitted for wildlife rehabilitation will be examined: the Eastern Grey Squirrel, Virginia Opossum, and Eastern Cottontail. Discussion will include reasons for admission, natural history, husbandry, housing, and release criteria. Proper nutrition will be analyzed in detail, including formulas and diets. This course will include photos and videos of hand-feeding techniques, including syringe-feeding and tube-feeding. Tips and tricks plus frequently encountered problems and solutions are all covered.

Pre-requisite: REHAB 203 Wildlife Rehabilitation Fundamentals

Kelsey Pleasants, kpleasants@wildlifecenter.org

MGT 205: Building your Case for Support

in Rockfish/ Afton

All organizations need money to operate, but some seem to be more successful in getting it. Typically it is because the most successful organizations have done a better job of showing that they deserve support, will use it wisely, and will actually make a difference with the support they receive. This class will walk you through the steps in building your case for support.

Ed Clark, eclark@wildlifecenter.org

1:15 pm - 3:15 pm

REHAB 105: Wildlife Capture, Restraint, Handling & Transport

in Blue Ridge Ballroom RIGHT

Whether you are interested in becoming a permitted wildlife rehabilitator, or you simply want to safely assist any injured wildlife that you encounter, this class is essential! Learn tried and true capture, restraint, and handling techniques used to effectively work with wildlife. This class will include photos and videos of appropriate methods used to capture and restrain commonly encountered species in wildlife rehabilitation. Discussion will include the importance of learning and developing skills to ensure the well-being of both you and the animal. We'll also cover indispensable transporting tips to keep you protected and the animal as secure and stress-free as possible.

Maggie McCartney, academy@wildlifecenter.org

MGT 207: Volunteers Don't Do It For Free! Volunteerism is an Exchange of Value

in Rockfish/ Afton

Volunteers are NOT slave labor, and cannot be treated as such. When someone volunteers for an organization, especially wildlife care programs, they expect to receive something in return ... just not money. Volunteer compensation may include the opportunity to learn and do new things, to contribute to the community, to make a real difference for wildlife, or to use specific skills and education to advance a personal mission. In addition, all volunteers deserve to earn and be given respect, courtesy, an enjoyable work environment, and the opportunity to grow and advance in their positions. This class will provide a look at volunteerism from the volunteers' point of view and will provide many tangible and practical ideas for recruiting, cultivating and retaining an effective volunteer workforce.

Ed Clark, eclark@wildlifecenter.org

SATURDAY

7:30 am – 8:30 am: Check-in (and Give-Away Room opens)

8:30 am - 8:45 am: Welcome (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

8:45 am - 9:45 am — SESSION 1

A. So You Think You Want To Be A Home Rehabber? (*Rockfish*)

Interested in becoming a home rehabber but not sure where to start? Feeling overwhelmed? Not sure if you have enough time? Confused by all the details – permits, training, record-keeping, supplies, zoonosis, home inspections, sponsors, vaccinations, formula, etc.? Help is on the way!

This class will break down all the details you need to know to get started at home, acquire equipment and supplies, find and work with a sponsor, set realistic goals, stay out of trouble, keep your sanity, and have you looking forward to the next baby season. This class is open to all, but will focus on individuals in Virginia interested in getting started practicing wildlife rehabilitation in the home setting, or seasoned rehabilitators interested in sponsoring a new home-based rehabilitator.

Linda McDaniel, augustacottontails@yahoo.com

B. Pain Management in Wildlife** (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

This presentation will cover all aspects of pain management, including the importance of a good veterinary-rehabilitator relationship, indications for different pain management techniques, and drug/treatment options.

Jen Riley, DVM, drjen@blueridgewildlifectr.org

9:55 am - 10:25 am — SESSION 2

A. Building a Neonatal Incubator (*Rockfish Gap/Afton Room*)

Incubators are an essential tool for wildlife rehabilitators but are often cost prohibitive. This step-by-step presentation illustrates how to build a sizable incubator that suits many species, is easy to maintain and clean, and is very affordable.

Peggy Hentz, redcreekwildlife@comcast.net

B. What's Wrong with My Patient? A Guideline and Overview to the Physical Exam (Lecture)** (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

This lecture will give participants an overview of how to perform a basic physical exam in avian, mammalian, and reptilian patients. We will focus on examining the patient systematically, making sure to include all body systems. This lecture is open to all attendees; it is required for anyone taking one of the afternoon hands-on workshops.

Karra Pierce, DVM, kpierce@wildlifecenter.org

10:35 am — SESSION 3

A. The Hurricane is Coming! To Run or to Stay? Lecture [30-minute lecture ends at 11:05 am]** (*Rockfish Gap/Afton Room*)

This lecture will focus on the basics of preparedness and response in case of an emergency affecting any rehabilitation facility. Attendees will learn the basic principles of what to do before, during, and after an emergency, including how to make an emergency plan, and how to build a help network. Attendees will learn some regulations and restrictions for moving animals in case of emergency or disaster. This lecture is open to all attendees; it is required for anyone taking the afternoon workshop.

Ernesto Dominguez, DVM, CWR, edominguez@wildlifecenter.org

B. Squirrel Ailments [90-minute lecture ends at 12:05 pm] (*Blue Ridge*)

From orphaned pinkie to hefty adults, fast and furious releases, and any ailments or injury in between or beyond, this session gives the squirrel its due. Routine calls, as well as unusual questions regarding our friend (and potential victim or troublemaker) the squirrel, will be discussed. This interactive class will help us stock our rehab knowledge toolbox with "what to do's" in any squirrel situation. The squirrel ... some people can't live with them, and most wildlife rehabilitators can't live without them.

Linda Bergman-Althouse, lbergman@ec.rr.com

11:10 am - 12:10 pm — SESSION 4

A. The Corvids: Learning from Biology to Aid in Rehabilitation (*Rockfish Gap/Afton Room*)

Caring for intelligent, highly social species in rehabilitation can be challenging, especially so for the corvid family. We will explore the biology and behaviors that make American and Fish Crows and Blue Jays so engaging and often an issue for rehabbers! We will discuss nutritional needs based on their natural diets, how to encourage natural foraging behaviors, and review enrichment ideas to help prevent boredom and aid in the development of skills that will help once they are released and (hopefully) integrated into their own corvid society. Handouts will include species profiles based on natural history and developmental milestones, diet steps, and housing ideas.

Lynn Miller, CWR, PhD, mbeland@securenet.net

LUNCH & NETWORKING – 12:10 pm - 1:25 pm

1:25 pm - 2:25 pm — SESSION 5

A. Reptile Triage** (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

It is not uncommon for reptiles to need rehabilitation, particularly after experiencing trauma. Of those reptiles affected by trauma, the most common cause is due to vehicles. Wound-care and prognostic variables are therefore important. This presentation will go over reptile handling, triage, wound-care, and prognostic variables for reptiles. Additional advanced methods of triage and care for reptiles such as photobiomodulation (cold laser therapy) and acupuncture techniques will be covered.

Tara Harrison, DVM, MPVM, DACZM, DACVPM, DECZM (Zoo Health Management), CVA, tmharri7@ncsu.edu

B. Improving Wildlife Corridors in Virginia: Identifying Collision Hotspots (*Rockfish Gap/Afton Room*)

The Virginia Safe Wildlife Corridors Collaborative (VSWCC) is a multidisciplinary group committed to protecting people and wildlife by reducing animal-vehicle conflicts and improving safe wildlife passage. VSWCC is interested in habitat connectivity measures for all species of wildlife, big and small, and aims to not only reduce wildlife-vehicle conflicts but also work towards implementing measures that allow the safe movement of wildlife across roads. Part of the group's work involves identifying "hotspots" –road segments in Virginia where wildlife-vehicle conflict is most prevalent. GIS mapping and modeling were used to identify the areas that are potentially in greatest need of mitigation for deer- and bear-vehicle collisions; these models will guide field validation for areas of focus in the coming year. This talk includes an overview of VSWCC's mission and project roster; researchers will present results from modeling/mapping used to identify large-animal collision hotspots throughout the state.

Raina DeFonza, rdefonza@wildlifecenter.org; Matthias Len, mleu@wm.edu;

Yorick Oden-Plants, yhodenplants@email.wm.edu

2:35 pm - 3:35 pm — SESSION 6

A. Understanding Milk Formulations (Blue Ridge Ballroom Left)

Mammal milk has evolved to meet the specific requirements for a species. Understanding formulation charts and how these relate to a variety of species will help meet the needs for just about any baby mammal.

Peggy Hentz, redcreekwildlife@comcast.net

B. The Hurricane is Coming! To Run or to Stay? Workshop (Rockfish Gap/ Afton Room)**

During this workshop, attendees will experience simulation exercises of a real emergency in a wildlife rehabilitation setting. Participants will have limited time and resources to save staff, volunteers, and the animals in care. Learn how to respond to the emergency, activate emergency services, and start the internal or external movement of animals through a help network. Those attending the workshop must attend the morning disaster lecture. Space is limited, pre-registration is required.

Ernesto Dominguez, DVM, CWR, edominguez@wildlifecenter.org

C. What's Wrong with My Patient? Workshop #1 (Blue Ridge Ballroom RIGHT)**

This hands-on workshop will give participants the opportunity to practice and develop their physical exam skills in a small group setting, with guidance and support. Those attending the workshop must attend the morning physical exam lecture. Space is limited.

Karra Pierce, DVM, kpierce@wildlifecenter.org

3:45 - 4:45 pm — SESSION 7

A. You CAN Rehab Neonate Bunnies: Tips for Success! (Blue Ridge L)

Cottontails are one of the most frequently admitted species in wildlife rehabilitation, yet there is an overwhelming shortage of bunny rehabbers -- and even FEWER who will do neonates. The standard reason is, "I don't do bunnies because they just die." Bunnies are notorious for their high mortality rate, but that doesn't have to be the case. Bunnies really can thrive in rehab – even neonates! This class will discuss tips on feeding, weaning, stimulating, and housing neonate bunnies, but the focus will be on the most CRITICAL stage for them – the period surrounding their eyes opening. Learn why they tend to develop GI complications (soft stool, "wet bottom," diarrhea) at this stage and how to effectively prevent and treat "the big D."

Tanya Lee, mtde.lee@gmail.com

B. WILD-ONe Workshop (Rockfish Gap/ Afton)**

This interactive workshop will provide an overview of the Center's FREE online patient management system, WILD-ONe (Wildlife Incident Log/Database and Online Network). Bring your laptop or tablet, patient records, and questions as we explore the capabilities of WILD-ONe, with time for one-on-one advice on how the system can best be used to manage your patient records and donor contacts. Workshop participants need their own laptop or tablet to participate; no iPads or iPhones, please! Space is limited.

Leigh-Ann Horne, LVT, lhorne@wildlifecenter.org

C. What's Wrong with My Patient? Workshop #2 [Repeat] (Blue Ridge Ballroom RIGHT)**

This hands-on workshop will give participants the opportunity to practice and develop their physical exam skills in a small group setting, with guidance and support. Those attending the workshop must attend the morning physical exam lecture. Space is limited, pre-registration is required.

Dr. Karra Pierce, DVM, kpierce@wildlifecenter.org

SUNDAY

7:30 am - 8:00 am – Check-in (and Give-Away Room opens)

8:00 am - 9:00 am — SESSION 1

A. Lost in Translation: Understanding Terminology and Medical Jargon** (*Rockfish Gap/Afton*)

This lecture will review the transfer of wildlife from a veterinary hospital to a rehabilitator from two different perspectives: the vet/vet tech/vet staff perspective and the rehabilitator perspective. For vets/techs/vet staff, discussion will include a review of necessary information to gather from the Good Samaritan dropping off the animal, as well as what information needs to be given to the receiving rehabber. Information will also include how to create easy-to-follow discharge plans to send along for the animal. For the rehabbers, discussion will include how to better understand discharge instructions sent home by your veterinarian, important questions to ask the vet when an animal is being transferred, and understanding common medications used for wildlife. If time allows, discussion will include how rehabbers can network with local vet hospitals to try to streamline and simplify the intake and transfer of animals.

Charlene Braman, LVT, braman.lvt@gmail.com

B. Hatchling Success (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

Hand-raising baby birds may be one of the most challenging aspects of wildlife rehabilitation. The smaller and younger the bird is, the lower the success rate and the higher the intimidation factor. These fragile hatchlings require long hours and specialized care. This presentation will touch on the process of incubation and hatching, and, most importantly, how to increase success with hand-rearing from hatch to release.

Leighann Cline, ClineL@si.edu

9:10 am - 10:10 am — SESSION 2

A. Fracture Assessment in Wildlife: More than just the Break** (*Blue Ridge Ballroom*)

Fracture assessment can be overwhelming for new (and sometimes veteran!) wildlife rehabilitators. This lecture will deconstruct the fracture assessment process – considering numerous factors such as the species' stress level in captivity, location of the fracture, concurrent disease, and capabilities of the facility – to help rehabilitators develop a more accurate assessment and prognosis.

Amber McNamara, DVM, CVA, mcnamaraa@lmc.edu

B. Introduction to Songbird Rehab and Triage Lecture (*Rockfish Gap*)

How do you get a fussy fledgling to eat easily? How can you stabilize a broken wing? What makes young cardinals so unusual to rehab? This class and complimentary workshop is a crash course for both the newbie and the seasoned rehabber to learn new skills and improve upon existing ones to make songbird rehabilitation less stressful for you and for your feathered patients. This lecture is open to all attendees; it is required for anyone taking the afternoon workshops.

E. Haley Olsen-Hodges, ehaleyoh@gmail.com

10:20 am - 11:20 am — SESSION 3

A. Ask the Vet: An Interactive Discussion** (*Rockfish Gap/Afton*)

Do you have medical questions regarding your wildlife patients? Wondering about the best method to treat an injury? Not quite sure how to use that donated piece of medical equipment? This interactive question-and-answer session will feature a panel of veterinarians, including vets from the Wildlife Center of Virginia. On Friday and Saturday, be sure to drop your questions into the questions box located at the registration table! If time allows, the panel will answer live questions from the audience.

Ernesto Dominguez, DVM, CWR, edominguez@wildlifecenter.org; Peach Van Wick, DVM, pvanwick@wildlifecenter.org; Jen Riley, DVM, drjen@blueridgewildlifectr.org; Amber McNamara, DVM, CVA, mcnamaraa@lmc.edu

B. Virginia Opossum Care: Using Science to Aid Rehabilitators (Blue Ridge Ballroom)

Based on the scientific literature covering biological milestones in developing marsupials, the care of these amazing animals has been evolving. This presentation will take you through the many aspects of their nutrition, offering a growth and care chart and recipes targeting specific developmental stages. To ensure optimal growth, rehabilitators also need to recognize when very specific supplemental care and anti-microbial support are appropriate. These strategies are all based on the admission conditions, weight range, and developmental age. Handouts will cover step-by-step growth and care charts, species snapshots, and diet ideas.

Lynn Miller, CWR, PhD, mbeland@securenet.net

11:30 am - 12:30 pm — SESSION 4

A. Rehabilitation in Costa Rica (Blue Ridge Ballroom)

Have you wondered what it would be like to rehab animals in paradise? This discussion will offer insights and experiences on rehabilitation at Alturas Wildlife Sanctuary in Costa Rica. Learn about the animals, the challenges and the rewards of rehabbing animals in a developing country, and how to help. From glorious waterfalls to mudslides and the rainy season, paradise isn't always all it's cracked up to be.

Karen Brace, kbrace2010@gmail.com

B. Introduction to Songbird Rehab and Triage Workshop #1 (Rockfish Gap/ Afton)

In this hands-on workshop, participants will have a chance to practice techniques and skills covered in the morning lecture, including physical examinations, triage, and bandaging on songbirds. Those attending the workshop must attend the morning songbird rehab and triage lecture. Space is limited; pre-registration required.

E. Haley Olsen-Hodges, ehaleyoh@gmail.com

LUNCH & NETWORKING – 12:30 pm - 1:45 pm

1:45 pm - 2:45 pm — SESSION 5

A. Dealing with the Public without Losing your Cool (Blue Ridge)

A comical yet useful presentation on how to handle THOSE phone calls. Topics include educating the caller, dealing with difficult personalities (verbal judo), and tips on how to keep this stress from ruining your day.

Peggy Hentz, redcreekwildlife@comcast.net

B. Introduction to Songbird Rehab and Triage Workshop #2 [Repeat] (Rockfish Gap/ Afton)

In this hands-on workshop, participants will have a chance to practice techniques and skills covered in the morning lecture, including physical examinations, triage, and bandaging on songbirds. Those attending the workshop must attend the morning songbird rehab and triage lecture. Space is limited; pre-registration required.

E. Haley Olsen-Hodges, ehaleyoh@gmail.com

A. Wildlife Patients as Snapshots: How the Rehab Community Can Contribute to the Bigger Picture (Blue Ridge Ballroom)**

Every patient that comes through our doors has the potential to tell a story, to teach us about what's going on in the world around us, and to help other animals. In this lecture, learn about the various research projects in which the Wildlife Center is involved and how you can become a part of this important aspect of wildlife rehabilitation and conservation medicine!

Peach Van Wick, DVM, pvanwick@wildlifecenter.org

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TURN IN YOUR EVALUATIONS AND NAME BADGES AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE!

THANK YOU, AND TRAVEL SAFELY

SPEAKERS

Linda Bergman-Althouse began volunteering at the Outer Banks Wildlife Shelter (OWLS) in Morehead City 24 years ago, pursuing her passion in wildlife conservation and rehabilitation. She achieved her certification as a state wildlife rehabilitator and continues to actively volunteer at OWLS, working in the clinic, coordinating and accomplishing field rescues, and mentoring new volunteers. Linda has been presenting wildlife classes on issues and topics relative to the field of wildlife rehabilitation for many years as requested by coordinators for wildlife symposiums and conferences held in our eastern region. Linda is proactively concerned with the loss of wildlife habitat due to progressive development in Onslow and its surrounding counties and regularly attends community and civic meetings to voice those concerns and to rally support through education. Linda holds a Masters of Science degree in educational psychology and is currently contracted by the Department of Labor to facilitate transition workshops for exiting military members aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Stations New River & Cherry Point, and Army Posts Fort Bragg, NC & Fort Hood, TX.

Karen Brace has been an animal lover forever and a home-based wildlife rehabilitator since 2012. She routinely chooses vacation spots based on the species that live there.

Charlene Braman has been a licensed veterinary technician since 2010 but has been involved in veterinary medicine for 16 years. She has extensive experience in zoo medicine, wildlife medicine and rehab, general practice medicine, emergency medicine, and animal behavior and has been volunteering with local wildlife rehabilitation groups for six years. Charlene enjoys working with all species of wildlife but bats are her absolute favorite.

Since the late 1970s, Ed Clark has been a national leader in the field of conservation. His involvement has ranged from wilderness designation and public land management to pesticide regulation and endangered species protection. Raised in Flint Hill, Virginia, Ed received a B.A. in history and political science from Bridgewater College. He did graduate work in education at James Madison University and University of Virginia. Ed founded the Wildlife Center of Virginia in 1982. His professional training includes environmental mediation, organization management, and strategic planning. Ed is in great demand as a motivational speaker, organizational consultant, and trainer. His conservation work takes him across the United States and to many foreign countries each year. When he is not on the road (and often when he is) Ed enjoys his passion for wildlife photography, shooting, and horseback riding.

Leighann Cline received her B.S. in zoology from Washington State University where she got her first taste of working with avian species. She spent six years working with wildlife at The Wildlife Center of Virginia and The Florida Keys Wild Bird Center. Now as an animal keeper for The Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Leighann has had the opportunity to work with endangered bird species from around the world.

Raina DeFonza grew up in the city of Pittsburgh until her family relocated to the seaside-suburbs of Ocean County, New Jersey. At an early age, Raina developed a love for exploring the natural world, as well as a deep appreciation of and respect for wildlife. While pursuing a degree in art and liberal studies at Rutgers University, and eventually Stockton College, Raina took courses in wildlife studies to better develop her understanding of the natural world. During and after college, Raina spent several years working for large and small legal and educational non-profit organizations, developing her business sense and client relations skills. After accepting a position as a naturalist at Catus Island County Park in Toms River, New Jersey, Raina realized her true passion of caring for wildlife and teaching people about human-wildlife interactions. Following that passion, Raina relocated to Virginia in August 2012 to begin her career as an outreach coordinator at the Wildlife Center. As outreach coordinator, some of Raina's responsibilities include conducting public education programs, creating content for the website, and working with the Center's team of education animals.

Dr. Ernesto Dominguez-Villegas grew up in Mexico City. He always loved animals, and after a safari in South Africa in 2002, he knew he wanted to be a veterinarian. After two years of studies in medical school (2003-2005), he quit med school to follow his dream of becoming a veterinarian. Dr. Ernesto graduated from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) School of Veterinary Medicine in 2013. After the second year of veterinary school, he volunteered at the Wildlife & Exotic Pet Hospital at UNAM. During his last year of veterinary school, Dr. Ernesto spent some time doing his graduation project in avian orthopedics at the Wildlife Center of Virginia. After getting his degree, he completed different postgraduate training in wildlife centers and zoos around the world, including the Belize Wildlife and Referral Clinic, Arcas Wildlife Center in Guatemala, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, Africam Safari Zoo in Mexico, the Johannesburg Zoo in South Africa, and a second externship at the Wildlife Center of Virginia as a veterinarian. From September 2015 to June 2016, he completed an internship in Raptor Medicine and Surgery at the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Ernesto came to the Center in the summer of 2016. He is interested in Conservation Medicine. Dr. Ernesto is currently pursuing board certification by the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine.

Dr. Tara Harrison graduated from Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine with her DVM degree. Afterward, she earned a master's of preventive veterinary medicine degree at the University of California-Davis, where she worked with Dr. Linda Munson as a post-doctoral fellow in the contraceptive advisory group. She did veterinary internships at Toledo Zoo and Wildlife Safari. She then spent ten years working as a veterinarian and curator at Potter Park Zoo and an additional year as the Director of Animal Health at Potter Park Zoo. Dr. Harrison was also an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University during that time. She then went back to UC Davis and was an Assistant Professor in the UC Davis Department of Medicine and Epidemiology and a veterinarian at the Sacramento Zoo. She is currently an Assistant Professor at North Carolina State University's College of Veterinary Medicine Exotic Animal Medicine Service. She is board certified in the American College of Zoological Medicine, the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine, and the European College of Zoological Medicine (Zoo Health Management). Her research interests are in complementary medicine as well as neoplasia and its treatments in exotic and wildlife species.

Brie Hashem is a Pennsylvania native who earned her Bachelor of Science in environmental resource management from Penn State University. After graduation, she spent almost five years as a clinic supervisor at Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research, Inc. in Newark, Delaware. She recently earned a Graduate Certificate in Wildlife Management from Oregon State University and is currently pursuing a Master of Natural Resources degree. Brie is a Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council. She is also a permitted bird bander through the United States Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory and bands the Center's raptor patients before release. As the head of the rehabilitation department, Brie is responsible for overseeing the post-clinical care and rehabilitation of the thousands of native wildlife patients the Center receives each year, hiring and training wildlife rehabilitation interns and externs, and maintaining rehabilitation inventory and caging. Brie is also responsible for the Center's behavior-based Black Bear cub rehabilitation and release program. When she is not working or studying, Brie can be found exploring the mountains or practicing yoga.