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## **Penn Vet stars in Animal Planet's 'Life at Vet U'**

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**"Life at Vet U," a new Animal Planet docu-series featuring the School of Veterinary Medicine, is set to premiere on Saturday, Oct. 1, at 10 p.m. The series follows six fourth-year Penn Vet students, as well as the faculty members who guide them in their clinical rotations.**

Animal Planet "Life at Vet U" features fourth-year Penn Vet students (from left to right) Max Emanuel, Melanie Lang, Lindsay Gallagher, Clint Kuban, Rebecca Bernstein, and Morgan Taylor. The students graduated in May.

For the first three years of veterinary school, students spend the equivalent of a full-time job—or more—in the classroom and lab, absorbing the core scientific principles that will guide their practice of animal medicine. Of course, that's in addition to the extra

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time studying, volunteering, and otherwise bolstering their skills outside of class.

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The fourth year of vet school is different. Students don white coats and begin clinical rotations. For the first time, with the assistance of their professors, they are caring for patients. It is this period of immersion, insecurity, and exhilaration that is the subject of "Life at Vet U," (<http://www.animalplanet.com/tv-shows/life-at-vet-u/about-life-at-vet-u/>) a new Animal Planet docu-series set to premiere on Saturday, Oct. 1, at 10 p.m. And the setting for the show is the School of Veterinary Medicine (<http://www.vet.upenn.edu/>).

The series follows six fourth-year Penn Vet students: Clint Kuban, Max Emanuel, Lindsay Gallagher, Morgan Taylor, Rebecca Bernstein, and Melanie Lang, as well as the faculty members who guide them in their clinical rotations. The series will feature six one-hour episodes as well as six webisodes and six enhanced episodes that will also air on the network.

While some students might feel nervous about being followed by a camera crew during such an intense part of their training, Gallagher was eager to be a part of it.

"From the time I was a little kid watching Animal Planet, I always loved the network and thought everything they produced was really positive," she says. "I was excited for the opportunity to get to show people what being a vet really means, how hard we work, and the dedication that we have to their pets."

Filming began in February of this year and continued through Commencement in May.

The production crew, from High Noon Entertainment, captured the students at all hours during rotations at Ryan Hospital (<http://www.vet.upenn.edu/veterinary-hospitals/ryan-veterinary-hospital/>) in Philadelphia and at New Bolton Center (<http://www.vet.upenn.edu/about/campuses/new-bolton-center-campus/>)'s large animal hospital in Kennett Square. They visited the students in their homes and even traveled with them on visits to see family in their hometowns. The storylines marry the professional with the personal to illuminate the demands of veterinary training.

For Brady Beale (<http://www.vet.upenn.edu/people/faculty-clinician-search/A.BEALE/>), a clinical instructor in ophthalmology who is featured in the show working with Kuban on a complicated cataract surgery, being under the spotlight was a novel experience.

"I can't pretend it wasn't nerve-wracking," says Beale. "There I was, doing one of the hardest cataract surgeries I've ever done in my life, and it was all caught on camera."

But Beale says the experience was made easier by the professionalism of the production crew and of the students like Kuban, who quickly became comfortable in front of the cameras.

"The film crew was just fantastic. They put everyone at ease so much so that you forgot you were wearing a microphone," she says. "And I think in some cases having them there actually enhanced the students' educational experience. The crew was asking questions and Clint, clearly, having done a lot of prep work, presented this complex case just as well as I could."

Among the stories featured in the show are a couple of memorable cases that Gallagher had a hand in during rotations at the New Bolton Center.

"There was one case I had, a mare and foal that I just really connected with," she says.

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"I worked hard to earn their trust through time and patience. Those are two patients I'll never forget."

These moments behind the scenes, where vets-in-training go above and beyond to care for animals, are part of what the Penn Vet staff and students are hopeful will be conveyed through the program.

"So many little kids grow up saying, 'I want to be a vet,' but no one knows how much commitment, time, and dedication that takes," Beale says. "These students tend to be in their twenties, their friends are going off to weddings and going out, and they are sitting at home with a bowl of ramen noodles and studying biochemistry. This show is shining a light on the sacrifices they've made and the thousands of hours of studying they've done. It shows the reward of finally realizing, in the fourth year, why that work was important."

Gallagher agrees.

"I'm crazy about this stuff; all the other cast members are the same," she says. "If we weren't, I don't think we could have gotten through vet school, through the fourth year, or any of it. I think the show is going to be a fantastic portrayal of that passion, and a really positive thing for the school, for us, and for the veterinary profession."

As seen on <https://penncurrent.upenn.edu/features/penn-vet-stars-in-animal-planets-life-at-vet-u> (<https://penncurrent.upenn.edu/features/penn-vet-stars-in-animal-planets-life-at-vet-u>)

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