

I attended the American Association of Bovine Practitioners 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona this year in hopes of broadening my knowledge base in topics that are specifically interesting to me. I am a VM-2 at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine. I am pursuing a career as a food animal veterinarian, specifically interested in beef cattle production medicine. Unfortunately, it is very hard to gain both experience and education in food animal medicine in veterinary schools across the country. Because of this, those of us interested in food animal work must seek out opportunities to gain new skills and make connections with large animal oriented people in the veterinary field.

Personally, I enjoy meeting new people. This conference allowed me the opportunity to engage in conversations with so many different people from all across the United States and a few from other parts of the world. This conference is one of the best opportunities I've had the joy of attending, perhaps over my entire four year veterinary school career. I was also able to share experiences with other veterinary students and we were able to bond over similarities between our schools. As students, we were able to compete in a Quiz Bowl on Saturday that allowed us to test our knowledge regarding cattle medicine. The Quiz Bowl was especially exciting because we were able to cheer on another school that we had become friends with that day when we were eliminated. Overall, I gained some great friends from Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine and I am truly thankful that this conference facilitated that for me.

Professionally, I was able to gain information about potential preceptorships, externships and even future jobs. I was also able to meet other veterinary students from across the country and world who share similar aspirations with myself. During the conference, I was able to attend a variety of presentations focused on beef cattle production, medicine, and surgery. I was also fortunate to attend research presentations by both established veterinarians and students. The seminars and workshops will serve to better my education as I head towards my clinical years. I was also glad to be able to learn about things that are not covered in our current curriculum.

Overall, attending this conference was a tremendous benefit for me. Although we have an extremely vigorous course load and we had to reschedule two exams to attend this conference, I would do it a thousand times over. It is so important for students interested in food animal medicine to seek outside education in order to make ourselves the best veterinarians that we can be. This specific conference is important to me as I am the upcoming AABP junior delegate for our school. I will be planning Missouri's vet school trip to the 2019 AABP Conference as well as voting on important matters that affect AABP nationally from a student aspect next year.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at [redacted].