

2022 VECCS Practice Leader Of The Year Award Finalists



Melinda Becker
Hospital Manager
VEG Boynton Beach

Nominated by:
Erica Bickel
Anthony Cheski
Angelina Morgan

My name is Melinda Becker and I am the Hospital Manager at Veterinary Emergency Group, Boynton Beach location. The focus for the majority of my career was in shelter medicine and HQHV spay and neuter services. In 2020 I switched gears to emergency medicine, and I'm so very glad I took that leap. The opportunities VEG has provided me to not only learn, but practice servant leadership in my day-to-day work, has put me on a positive trajectory toward success in my role as a Hospital Manager. Connecting with my team and peers from a humanistic standpoint, allows me to be the best version of myself every day. I'm humbled by the encouragement and mentorship I've received to help me achieve my personal and professional goals. I have my dog, Oliver, to thank for inspiring me to be in the veterinary field. In my spare time I take every opportunity to honor his memory by connecting with loved ones, being out in nature, and finding happiness in all that I do.



Jennifer Maddess
LVT and Logistics Manager
Animal Emergency Care

Nominated by:
Melissa Furnari

Jennifer has been at Animal Emergency Care for over 11 years and in that time she has grown from a Veterinary Assistant to one of the most outstanding LVTs that I have had the pleasure of working with. Jennifer truly is the glue that holds our department together and our entire team looks up to her and towards her for leadership and advice. Jennifer works full time on the floor as an LVT and is scheduled to work the overnight position but is not afraid to jump in and fill in on other shifts to support the team wherever there is a need. Jennifer also is our Logistics Manager and handles hospital inventory, day-to-day hospital operations and has valuable input on new Policies and Procedures. Her experience and willingness to help in any way she can draws people to her and everyone looks to her for guidance and advice. Jennifer has put in the time and hard work to become a very skilled LVT performing critical anesthesia cases including TIVA, epidurals and advanced critical care and ICU skills. Jennifer also is very focused on keeping up on advances in Veterinary Medicine and shares her knowledge on the floor with the team. The leadership she provides comes naturally and there is not a duty or job within our hospital that Jen will not jump in and help with if needed. The professionalism and compassion for our patients is Jennifer's top priority and she embodies the culture of Animal Emergency Care and what we stand for. Our Hospital would not be what it is today without the influence and guidance Jennifer has had.



Kevin Squires

Nominated by:

Allaura Loy
 Allison Reesh
 Scotty Morgan
 Samuel Ulbright
 Nedal Klaib
 Christopher Mayo
 Brooklynn Fay
 Kaitlen Beal
 Samantha Pittman
 Justice Burger
 Devin Reilly
 Jenn Courville
 Karla Fox
 Susan Seigendall
 Jessica Bradley
 Savannah Brommer
 Jennifer Bronk
 Miranda Chosen
 Jessica McCart
 Andrew Rocco
 Jaidrian Burger
 Corinne Mayo

I joined the Pet Emergency Clinic & Referral Center team in April 2018. Prior to joining the veterinary industry, I worked in the human side of healthcare for 5 years in Human Resources and Operation Management. Before working in human healthcare, I spent the previous 20 years in the Hospitality Industry.

I grew up in the Big Sky State of Montana and now resides in Spokane WA. I graduated in 1998 with a B.S in Business Management from Montana State University located in Bozeman, MT. I had a career ending injury 10 years ago which led to a series of back surgeries for which I was told I would never walk again. To keep my mind sharp during recovery from the surgeries, I decided to pursue my Master's in Business Administration at the University of Montana in Missoula MT. I overcame the doctor's diagnosis and recovered 110% and walked down the aisle to receive my MBA degree 2.5 years later.

I came on board at Pet Emergency at a very critical time when the company was struggling financially and close to a potential corporate sale. The corporate sale did not happen as planned, so I worked closely with the Board of Directors, and we acted quickly to make some major changes to save the company.

I am proud to say, in the 4 exciting years I have been here, we have completely turned the company around by expanding our services, building an incredible team, created an amazing family, and in the last two years we have seen some of the most profitable years our company has had in its 45 years of existence. I hope to continue moving the clinic in a direction of great customer service, exceptional medicine, and a sustainable culture for ER and Specialty DVMs and support staff to thrive in an industry that seems to be stressing their greatest assets to the limit.

Like most others in this industry, I have a passion for saving animals and currently have 5 dogs and 2 cats and I continue telling myself I do not have room for more.



David Stromberg

Hospital Administrator
 VCA Emergency Animal
 Hospital

Nominated by:

Sylvia Gottfried

David Stromberg is the Regional Operations Director for VCA in Southern California. With over 20 years of experience in veterinary medicine he is dedicated to improving the veterinary associate experience. In addition to providing exceptional medical care for patients, David is an advocate for the health and well-being of his staff. David joined VCA in 2012 as the Hospital Administrator for VCA Emergency Animal Hospital & Referral Center in San Diego CA. In 2014 he undertook a 2-year remodel of the hospital, the first major remodel since its construction in 1979. Working closely with the team they were able to grow the hospital by over 170%, dramatically increasing the number of patients they were able to care for. David has continued to grow the VCA family and is currently managing 3 emergency/specialty hospitals.

In 2018, to further support the well-being of his staff David partnered with his team to develop a Wellness Committee. A licensed therapist leads bimonthly mental health workshops and is available to all associates. As the veterinary medicine field continues to grow and evolve, David is excited to continue to support his associates and provide the highest level of care for patients and clients. In his free time David loves camping, hiking and mountain biking. At home he stays busy with 2 kids and a household of animals.



Heather Zamer
Clinical Manager of Surgery,
Anesthesia, Neurology,
Rehabilitation, and Internal
Medicine
MedVet New Orleans

Nominated by:
Colleen Mangum

My journey in veterinary medicine began in high school with an after-school veterinary assistant position that sparked my passion for this field. I graduated from the University of Mississippi with a degree in Park and Recreation Management, but quickly after graduation applied and was accepted to Delgado Community College Veterinary Technology Program. I attained my AAS in Veterinary Technology and passed my VTNE to become an RVT in 2010. My RVT career began at Veterinary Medicine Schools, and I found a love for education through these positions at Ross University and Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine. My position at these schools led me down a path of education, management, and a desire to be back in the clinical setting. In 2013, I began working at MedVet, narrowing my interest, and gaining a huge passion for specialty surgery. Since joining MedVet I have managed and developed many different specialty services including surgery, anesthesia, rehab, neurology, internal medicine, and radiology. I enjoy learning and growing with each department. As my career has developed, I continue to gravitate towards leadership as my primary career goal, but my background in the teaching places prioritization on education and training within my management responsibilities. I am an adjunct clinical study teacher for Delgado Community College Veterinary Technology Program, allowing me to use the clinical setting to teach veterinary technician students the skills they will need after school. I utilize this opportunity to highlight emergency and specialty medicine in effort to recruit and inspire veterinary technicians. I have presented at two of our MedVet annual veterinary conferences, advancing my public speaking skills and learning to interface with our veterinary community. I pride myself in stepping up to new challenges, leading by example, and just being a genuine person to my staff. I believe in every person that I hire and want to develop them to their best self, seeking with them to find the "it" in their career that makes them fulfilled. I live in New Orleans with my boyfriend and biggest supporter Mc, along with our adopted Frenchy Curtis, and two cat brothers K-Doe and Fess. New Orleans has been my home off and on for the past 15 years. I love the culture, food, music, and soul that this city brings to its community; it blends very well with the unique culture of MedVet New Orleans. I am proud to be a part of both! I am honored to be nominated for this award.