



WHAT MOVES YOU?

Veterinary technicians are the heart of veterinary medicine. We are passionate and dedicated, and we each have a story to tell.

Today's Veterinary Technician wants to hear yours!

What drives you?

What inspires you?

What moves you?

Send us your story at TVTech_submissions@NAVCC.com. Submissions should be approximately 500 words or less and may be posted on our website or edited for publication in the journal.

Tell us your story!

"Motivation can take you far in life when you apply it to something you love."

—Elizabeth Exline

Gratitude and Giving Back

When I was a little girl and our beloved retriever, Runner, was sick, my mom would load him into the back seat of our little Honda hatchback and off to the veterinarian we would go. Windows rolled down, wind whipping through the car, and a view of a big wet dog nose in the side mirror. I was too young to understand how vet teams worked then, and yet I appreciated them so much because they seemed to work magic on my much-loved dog, making all right with the world again.



Elizabeth Exline, LVT

Fast forward more than 30 years: Every morning I load Carlee Mae—my retriever—into the back seat of my little Hyundai hatchback and off to the veterinarian's office we go. Windows rolled down, wind whipping through the car, and a view of a big wet dog nose in the side mirror. But today, all is right with the world already. The office is the veterinary clinic where Carlee Mae and I spend our days—she as the "clinic dog," and I as part of the team that helps other people's pets go home feeling better.



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—Elizabeth Exline

ELIZABETH EXLINE with her
Labrador retriever, Carlee Mae.



Artful Paws Photography

Somewhere between being that little girl and today, I decided I wanted to be a part of the magic. Everything I know about this field I originally learned through "on the job" training at the vet's office where I volunteered starting in my late teens. It wasn't until my late 20s that I decided I wanted to get a degree in this field. But it was an intimidating decision. Was I too old to learn new tricks? Would there be enough hours left in the day to study adequately after working a 10-hour-plus shift?

The experience of earning a degree in veterinary technology from Penn Foster College changed my life. Aside from the obvious benefits—that education makes us better equipped to do the best work we can each day—it also taught me a great deal about self-esteem, self-trust, self-pride, self-patience, self-discipline, and maybe even a lesson or two in self-humbling.

I can honestly say that graduating, and then being honored as the 2016 Distance Education Accrediting Council (DEAC) Outstanding Graduate of the Year, is the achievement I am most proud of in my life. I'm sometimes amazed that I went to school and graduated later in

life—*summa cum laude*—while working more than full-time as a practice manager. For me, this is proof that we can teach old dogs new tricks and that motivation can take you far in life when you apply it to something you love.

My education is furthering my career in ways I can only begin to dream of. I am so excited for the road ahead, for all the possibilities within the veterinary field, and for the endless opportunities that have come my way. This is a field for lifelong learning, and I am up for the challenge. I carry with me the knowledge that there will always be concerned little girls and their parents bringing their best pet friends into our clinic. My goal is to become the best technician possible for these patients so these little girls return home feeling that, with the magic that happened at the vet's clinic, all is right with the world again.

Whatever my future holds, it will always bring me back to the road I've traveled to become a licensed veterinary technician. Because when you love what you do, and you are educated to do it to the best of your ability, all will be right in the "adult" world, too. ■