

### **Shawna Cosgrove, CVT, VTS (ECC)**

Shawna has been a dedicated veterinary technician for over 25 years. She earned her Associate of Science degree from the Veterinary Technology program at SUNY Canton in 1997. Shortly after graduating, she relocated to Massachusetts, where she began her career in general practice before transitioning to emergency medicine at Massachusetts Veterinary Referral Hospital. It was there that she discovered her passion for emergency and critical care medicine.

In 2016, Shawna earned her Veterinary Technician Specialty in Emergency and Critical Care, and she continues to speak on topics she's passionate about—including respiratory emergencies and high-quality nursing care. A strong advocate for technician education, she stepped into the role of Technician Learning and Development Specialist in 2022, where she focuses on creating training programs and professional growth opportunities for veterinary technicians and assistants.

Outside of work, Shawna enjoys life at home with her husband, two children, dogs, cat and chickens.

### **Meghan Dakin, CVT, VTS (ECC), VTS (Anesthesia & Analgesia)**

Meg studied pre-veterinary medicine at the University of New Hampshire and has worked in the veterinary medical field for over 20 years. She became a certified veterinary technician in 2008 and was inspired early on in her career to pursue veterinary technician specialization. She applied to the Academy of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Technicians and Nurses (AVECCTN) in 2016, becoming a VTS in Emergency and Critical Care (ECC) in 2017. She went on to apply to the Academy of Veterinary Technicians in Anesthesia and Analgesia (AVTAA) in 2023. In a full circle career moment, she earned the additional title of VTS in Anesthesia and Analgesia in 2024, just over 20 years to the day she started her first job in veterinary medicine.

Thanks to the many amazing mentors she had the privilege of learning from over the years, Meg discovered a passion for teaching and training other veterinary support professionals, from veterinary assistants to those studying for the VTNE and beyond, and is thrilled to be here presenting at the NEVTC today.

### **Vanessa Farrell, MSM, LAT, CVT**

Vanessa is a graduate of Mount Ida College and have been working at MIT since 2013 in various capacities in the last 12 years, including vet tech, colony management supervisor, and currently lab manager for a lab studying neurodegenerative diseases.

### **Jennifer Haggett, CVT, VTS (Dentistry)**

Jenn graduated from Becker College with an Associate's degree in Veterinary Technology and she has been a Certified Veterinary Technician since 1999. She spent 18 years working at a general practice in Worcester, MA where she acquired a passion for dentistry. In 2017, Jenn started working at Veterinary Dental Services, LLC in Boxborough, MA where she was inspired to pursue her specialty VTS in Dentistry, which she earned in 2020. Jenn is not only passionate about her patients (and their teeth!) but also loves any opportunity to spread her knowledge of dentistry to others.

### **Kathleen Y. Hoffman, BS, CVT, RLATG, CCFP**

Kathleen Hoffman is the inaugural Outreach Specialist at Boston University's Animal Science Center, where she builds connections between the research community and the next generation of laboratory animal professionals. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Animal and Veterinary Science & Technology from the University of Rhode Island and is a Certified Veterinary Technician via alternative pathway—an aspect of her career journey that continues to inform her passion for inclusive professional development in veterinary medicine.

Kathleen began her career in companion animal practice in 2002 before transitioning into laboratory animal science in 2016. Her previous roles include Senior Veterinary Technician at Brigham and Women's Hospital's Center for Comparative Medicine and laboratory staff in the Takao K. Hensch Lab for Neurodevelopment at Harvard University. She has served as Vice President of the New England Branch of AALAS and as Adjunct Faculty in the Veterinary Technician Program at Massasoit Community College.

In addition to delivering talks across New England, Kathleen has consulted with clients as far as the West Coast and is always open to new collaborations that advance animal welfare and career pathways in lab animal science.

### **Sheena Kaleshian, B.S., CVT**

Sheena graduated from UMass Amherst with a degree in Animal Science, Pre-Vet, with an equine focus. She worked for several years in small animal medicine in a referral hospital and in general practice. She made the move to equine medicine in 2018 and has been on the regional contact arm of the AA EVT board for the last 3 years.

### **Alyssa Mages, BS, CVT, FVTE**

As CVO of Empowering Veterinary Teams® (EVT), Alyssa leads content development, clinical training, and the overall strategic direction. With a BS in Marine Biology and an AS in Veterinary Technology, she is a Certified Veterinary Technician (CVT) who has spent over 20 years in the veterinary profession. She is an inaugural Fellow of the Association of Veterinary Technician Educators (FVTE), underscoring her dedication to education in the

field. Alyssa also serves as the Director of MentorVet Tech and co-founded both nûrtûr and the nonprofit Project Sticker. As a Key Opinion Leader (KOL) and speaker, she collaborates with industry providers and has presented at national conferences, co-authored a book, and contributed to various publications and podcasts. Alyssa is passionate about inclusivity and empowering all voices within veterinary medicine to help strengthen the profession.

### **Jaime Maher, CVT, VTS (ECC, anesthesia & analgesia)**

Jaime has been working as a certified veterinary technician for over 25 years. 2025 marks her 20th anniversary as a Veterinary Technician Specialist in Emergency Critical Care and she has been credentialed as a VTS in anesthesia and analgesia since 2012. She is also Fear Free certified and a RECOVER certified rescuer. Jaime is currently in charge of learning and development at Westbridge Veterinary Referral Hospital in West Bridgewater, MA.

### **Amy Newfield, MS, CVT, VTS (ECC)**

Amy is the owner of Veterinary Team Training which offers online medical leadership education for veterinary professionals. After starting in a rural general practice with one doctor, Amy has worked for almost every business sector including private, corporate, non-profit and federal government. After obtaining a masters in leadership and management she published the award-winning and best-selling books “Oops, I Became a Manager” and “Oops, My Team is Toxic.” This older dinosaur still pulls floor shifts in an ER hospital. She lives in Massachusetts with her wonderful furry kids where you can find her eating chocolate, running in the woods, and diving in the ocean.

### **Nicholas Raimondi, MPH, CVT**

Nicholas Raimondi, MPH, CVT is a Certified Veterinary Technician and educator based in Rhode Island. He began his career in animal care as a volunteer at the Mass Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary and later worked in ICU at Tufts University, earning his CVT in 2003. After relocating to Rhode Island, he joined Ocean State Veterinary Specialists as an emergency and anesthesia technician and training coordinator.

Nick has over a decade of teaching experience and currently serves as a full-time faculty member in the Veterinary Technology program at the New England Institute of Technology. He holds degrees in animal science, veterinary technology, and public health. He is also the legislative chair of the Rhode Island Veterinary Technician Association and serves on the RIVMA/RIVTA Joint Committee, advocating for mandatory veterinary technician licensure in Rhode Island. In addition to his academic work, he provides per diem support to local veterinary practices.

### **Chris Spinetto, CVT**

I graduated from Penn Foster in 2022 and passed my VTNE the same year. I work overnights in the large animal hospital at Tufts and have been there 21 years.

### **Carloyn Tai, CVT, VTS (ECC)(SAIM)**

Carolyn has been a veterinary technician for...a while. She has been working in veterinary Emergency & Critical Care for over 25 years. She received her VTS in ECC in 2013 and her VTS in SAIM in 2021. She has worked at the Cummings Veterinary Medical Center at Tufts University for 15 years and now works as the hemodialysis technician.

Carolyn's areas of professional interest include catheter locking & flushing solutions, catheter related infections, extracorporeal therapies, and hemostasis & coagulation.

She lives in Hudson, MA with her husband, their daughter, a somewhat neurotic cat named Beefcake Jones, an energetic puppy named Charlie Bucket, and a pig in a rabbit suit named Wilbur.

### **Rebecca Terra, LVT, VTS (Anesthesia & Analgesia)**

Rebecca graduated from Mercy University in 2017, and began working at a small animal specialty/emergency hospital in the surgery service. Rebecca's passion for anesthesia and love of education inspired her to become a Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS) in Anesthesia & Analgesia. After obtaining this certification in 2023, Rebecca became surgery service supervisor, gaining a valuable skillset in leadership and mentorship, and joined the staff at Mercy University as an adjunct professor. Rebecca is co-founder of CARES VetMed, an anesthesia training company, promoting excellent anesthesia care through training to general practices and specialty hospitals. Rebecca practices patience and clear communication and advocates for anesthetic safety and preparedness.

### **Liza Wysong, BAS, RVT, VTS (CP-CF)(SAIM)**

Liza Wysong has been working in veterinary medicine for 25 years and is a graduate of the bachelor's program in Veterinary Technology at St. Petersburg College. She is a Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS) in Canine/Feline Clinical Practice and Small Animal Internal Medicine with experience in general practice, internal medicine, oncology, emergency, and critical care. Currently, Liza is the Program Director for the Veterinary Technology Program at Rowan College of South Jersey.

### **Zahara Yee, CVT, rLATg, SRA**

Zahara is a credentialed veterinary technician with experience in companion animal practice, volunteer spay/neuter projects, and laboratory animal research. She currently

manages the research support services program at Massachusetts General Hospital's Center for Comparative Medicine, where she oversees the execution and

troubleshooting of in vivo technical services for scientific studies. Zahara is also pursuing a Master of Science in Animal Welfare and Behavior at the University of Pennsylvania and has a great interest in promoting veterinary medicine, particularly with encouraging the advancement of the veterinary technician profession.