

Linda Munson Scholarship for Wildlife Pathology Research

The American College of Veterinary Pathology (ACVP) is pleased to announce Dr. Megan Colburn, DVM, DACVP, of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as the 2026 recipient of the Linda Munson Scholarship for Wildlife Pathology Research.



The Linda Munson Scholarship for Wildlife Pathology Research is made possible through the generosity of the late Dr. Linda Munson, Diplomate and Past President of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP). Dr. Munson was a pioneering force in endangered species conservation, shaping the field through her leadership at the Smithsonian Institution, University of Tennessee, and later at UC Davis, where she rose to full professor and directed the veterinary pathology service. She mentored a generation of veterinary pathologists, many of whom now lead wildlife pathology efforts nationwide, and inspired countless students to pursue careers in wildlife and conservation medicine. Her research advanced the integration of animal reproductive health into conservation strategies and documented the impact of infectious diseases on diverse species, including lions, wild dogs, cheetahs, jaguars, and red wolves. Dr. Munson played a central role in investigating disease-related changes in endangered Channel Island fox populations, contributing vital expertise to recovery efforts.

To be eligible for the Linda Munson Scholarship, applicants must:

- Have a DVM or equivalent
- Have completed a residency in anatomic or clinical pathology by the time the scholarship begins
- Be eligible to take Phase II of the ACVP Certifying Examination
- Devote most of their time pursuing research training in a mentored environment on a topic that contributes to the understanding of diseases of wildlife, preferably with a conservation impact
- Be in a PhD degree granting program with didactic coursework completed or in a non-degree granting program as a postdoctoral fellow

This scholarship is designed to support trainees engaged in intensive, mentored research focused on advancing the understanding of diseases of wildlife, with preference given to projects that have a conservation impact. Funding supports individuals who devote the majority of their effort to research within a structured environment that includes strong mentorship, clearly defined aims, and access to appropriate facilities, expertise, and professional development opportunities. Recipients are selected based on their ability to conduct a well-defined research project, commitment to career development in wildlife pathology, and participation in a training environment that supports interdisciplinary collaboration and high-quality research.

Dr. Colburn, who received her DVM from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign College (UIUC), is completing her PhD in the Program in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology at UIUC. Her research investigates the pathogenesis and host-pathogen interactions of experimental and natural *Emydomyces testavorans* infection in chelonians.

Karen A. Terio, DVM, PhD, DACVP, professor and mentor to Megan, shared: "Megan has already demonstrated academic excellence and the ability to succeed at the graduate level. Her attention to detail within the lab combined with her passion for conservation and training in ecology will give her skills to make significant impacts on our understanding of disease in wild animals."

ACVP is a professional membership organization comprised of board-certified scientists that have set the standard for veterinary pathology for over 75 years. ACVP is proud to congratulate Dr. Colburn on this scholarship award while the veterinary pathology community looks forward to the addition of this impactful research.