

AVS/IVSA UK & Ireland Elections 2020

Name: Elizabeth Pilar Brooks
Position: IVSA Public Health Officer
Vet School: The Royal Veterinary College
Year: BVetMed 1

About me:

I am a first year international student coming from the United States. Previous to coming to the RVC I completed a degree in animal science at Cornell University. In the future I am interested in pursuing a residency in surgery with an aim of using these skills to work with wildlife. I have always been interested in conservation and this interest combined with various travel programs has led me down the road of one health and ultimately gotten me invested in public health. Apart from academics I am also involved in the RVC boat club, Zoological Society, and Students for Global and One Health.

Experience:

As I mentioned, my previous degree at Cornell was a bachelors of science in animal science. A large focus on this degree was centered on production animals and how their management could effect public health. In my spare time at Cornell I worked to promote awareness for animal science and agriculture as vice-President of the Block and Bridle Society and as a member of Alpha Zeta Fraternity, an agriculturally focused honors organization. Apart from these leadership positions I have also had opportunities to travel and work with veterinary students and professionals from around the world in various educational programs. I feel that these experiences have taught me a great deal about the present-day challenges that the veterinary field faces, particularly in managing public health.

As vice-president of Block and Bridle I was involved in planning educational, out-reach activities with elementary school children where they were taught the importance of animal and plant agriculture in society as well as proper animal handling techniques. It is my belief that educating children early on the proper treatment and handling of animals is one important step in improving public health, seeing as how such a large proportion of emerging diseases are zoonotic in nature.

At the RVC I have become involved with Students for Global and One Health as the vice-president. In my few months on committee I have helped plan talks given my professionals in the one health profession and presentations given by our committee at global health conferences.

What I would try to achieve in my role:

As public health officer I would like to give veterinary students a better understanding of what public health is and why they should want to become involved in it. I have met numerous vet students that have not even considered a career in public health because they do not realize how integral the veterinary perspective is. From my few months at RVC I have noticed that lectures centered on one health and public health are often poorly attended and seen as 'boring'. Many students I have spoken to have expressed not wholly understanding topics such as public health and one health. As public health officer I would strive to change the way vet students perceive public health and their role in it.

Why you should vote for me:

While I am relatively new to the RVC I think I bring new perspectives to the table having completed a previous degree and being a bit older than most of my cohort. I have worked with a wide range of professionals in the agricultural, medical, and veterinary fields and hope to incorporate my experiences should I be elected as public health officer. I am truly interested in and dedicated to this area of veterinary medicine and believe I would make an effective public health officer.