VAC11

**World Horse Welfare Undergraduate Bursary Scheme Options 2012**

1. **International options**

In 2012, World Horse Welfare’s International Training department will be offering the opportunity for one veterinary student to work in each of the following countries:

* Guatemala
* Honduras
* Nicaragua
* South Africa
* Lesotho
* Mexico

1. **South Africa**

Soweto’s 3,000 working horses are used primarily as means of transport for goods. They are the vehicles of scrap metal collectors, furniture movers and, despite recent electrification, coal vendors, who sell coal to those who cannot afford electricity.

Common injuries were caused by ill-fitting and inadequate harness. Lack of breeching and overloaded make-shift carts caused deep wounds. Access to affordable farriers proved challenging with owners shoeing their own horses and making horse shoes with reinforced steel rod.

World Horse Welfare commenced its training initiative in September 2008. Working in collaboration with the Soweto Equestrian Foundation, our teams utilise the centre’s facilities to undertake the training. Having recently completed course three, 60 students have received farriery or saddlery training with integrated business skills.

World Horse Welfare research previously undertaken:

* Clinical extramural studies to assess the impact of inadequate horse husbandry with a focus on the prevalence of preventable musculoskeletal disorders as a consequence of over work, limited farriery and ill-fitting harness.
* Do structural changes in the equine hoof predispose to foot lesions?
* Help in the basic treatment of wounds and infections, including bandaging, suturing and the appropriate use of antibiotics.
* Perform a full Lameness examination.
* Gain a better understanding of the use of therapeutic shoeing.
* Recognise the clinical signs of African Horse Sickness, and methods of prevention.
* Follow a laminitis case including treatment.

1. **Lesotho**

Working horses (87,000) and donkeys (146,000) play a vital role in the lives of the people of Lesotho. These animals constitute one of the primary means of transport, particularly in mountainous areas where roads are poor or non-existent. Horses are also used for ploughing, weeding and transporting crops. Tourism is another important source of income for villagers who hire their horses out to tourist lodges.

Deep wounds and sores were evident from poorly fitting harness and bridle work. Horse owners used inappropriate materials such as barbed wire to repair worn equipment. As a consequence of undulating terrains and lack of farriery skills, basic foot care needs were not being addressed.

World Horse Welfare commenced its training initiative in 2007. To date, 83 students have received training. In 2009, our training relocated to Thaba Tseka, a rural region of Lesotho to reach those horses located in remote communities.

World Horse Welfare research previously undertaken:

* Assessment of the impact of a charity training programme on health and welfare of working horses in Lesotho.
* A baseline survey of health and welfare of working horses in Lesotho – owner knowledge and husbandry practices.
* A baseline survey of health and welfare of working horses in Lesotho – findings of clinical and tack examination.
* Tracer study of students of the World Horse Welfare education and training programme conducted in Lesotho in 2007.
* Coprological prevalence and intensity of helminth infection in working horses in Lesotho.
* Seroprevalence of Streptococcus equi in working horses in Lesotho.

1. **Mexico**

Mexico has more than five million horses, donkeys and mules which are used for agricultural purposes and transporting people. Donkeys are also used for hauling carts piled high with rubbish to dumps.

World Horse Welfare's training teams have been committed to improve horse welfare in Mexico for over 20 years. Our current programme is being undertaken in Veracruz (considered the poorest state in Mexico) in the village of Xalapa. With 444,341 horses, donkeys and mules, Veracruz has the largest population of working animals in the country.

A benefit of our collaboration with The Donkey Sanctuary and the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM) is the ability to combine our training programme with the mobile veterinary clinic based in Veracruz. The teams often identify wounds sustained from ill-fitting and poorly made pack saddles on field trips. Fortunately, our vets provide first aid to treat the wounds, while our trained saddlers manufacture remedial felt pads for use under the pack saddles to alleviate pressure from the wound site.

World Horse Welfare research previously undertaken:

* Epidemiological survey of the prevalence of dental disorders in working equids with the aim of furthering understanding of the relevance of such disorders to the welfare and management of working equids in developing countries.

1. **Guatemala**

With extreme poverty levels widespread throughout rural and indigenous communities, many of Guatemala’s 250,000 working equines are heavily relied upon for income generation and agricultural related transport. Working hard to transport crops through dense forests and rugged terrain, these animals often have high physical demands placed upon them.

Prevalent injuries resulted from construction methods and materials used to manufacture pack saddles. Lameness was evident as horses worked across rugged terrain carrying uneven loads. Commonly, many horse owners lacked the knowledge and resources maintain basic welfare standards.

World Horse Welfare has been working in Guatemala since 2006. Four courses have been completed in the Jalapa district and 40 farrier and 40 saddler students have received training. The location of our fifth course is in Chimaltenango which is North West of Guatemala city.

World Horse Welfare research previously undertaken:

* Coprological prevalence of helminth infection in working equids in Jalapa, Guatemala.

1. **Honduras**

Working horses (130,000) are integral to the urban and rural economy in Honduras. Great numbers of horses are used for carriage driving in towns and villages. Others are relied upon for agricultural purposes and used as pack animals in remote communities.

Major welfare problems identified were overworked horses, tack related injuries and overgrown and poorly managed feet. Those horses used for carriage work were badly shod. Commonly, rubber pads cut from used car tyres had been used as make-shift shoes. Unfortunately, the use of such inappropriate materials coupled with the self-taught shoeing methods adopted had caused additional foot problems and lameness amongst the working horse population.

Access to veterinary care is extremely limiting with only 10 of the 18 states being covered by Government veterinarians. There are no veterinary faculties in Honduras and veterinarians are required to train in Central and Northern American countries.

World Horse Welfare has completed a feasibility study and started its farriery and saddlery training programme in August 2010.

1. **Nicaragua**

Located in Central America, Nicaragua is bordered by Honduras, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Pacific Ocean. Considered as the second poorest country in the Western hemisphere (The World Bank, 2011), Nicaragua is ranked 115th on the UNDP Human Development Report Index (2010). With a population of 5.9 million, 48% live below the poverty line and 15.8% live in extreme poverty surviving on $1.25 per day (UNDP, 2010).

The World Organisation for Animal Health estimates the equine population in Nicaragua to be 406,707 (OIE, 2010). Considerable numbers of horses can be observed working in many capacities across the country; in rural areas in agriculture and transport, in cities transporting people, produce and materials, on beaches as tourist riding horses or as carriage horses in popular cities. Training in Nicaragua will commence in November 2011 with one training module, a further four training modules will take place in 2012 to complete World Horse Welfare first years training in this new location.

*Costings*

The approximate costings for each country are based on 2011 prices and are subject to change:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Flight** | **Food and accommodation (per day)** | **In-country transport** |
| South Africa | £900 | £50 | £150 |
| Lesotho | £900 | £40 | £150 |
| Mexico | £900 | £50 | £150 |
| Guatemala | £1000 | £45 | £150 |
| Honduras | £1000 | £45 | £150 |
| Nicaragua | £1000 | £50 | £150 |

*Travel Options*

Travel to project countries will be required when World Horse Welfare’s International Training courses are being undertaken. The 2012 training schedule will be available upon request in October 2011.

1. **UK options**

World Horse Welfare has four Recovery and Rehabilitation Centres sited in:

* Norfolk at Hall Farm, Snetterton
* Lancashire at Penny Farm, Blackpool
* Somerset at Glenda Spooner Farm, Kingsdon
* Aberdeenshire at Belwade Farm, Aboyne

The work of the Centres is to rehabilitate and rehome the welfare cases that come into them. This process involves a team approach involving a number of specialists and a wide range of problems are successfully dealt with. World Horse Welfare currently has over 1600 horses, ponies and donkeys out on loan to approved homes.

We also have excellent links with Veterinary Schools and practices across the UK. Previous recipients of bursaries have carried out research into laminitis, obesity and farriery topics. World horse Welfare has also sponsored numerous research projects currently we have on-going work looking at equine welfare issues in the UK and riding surfaces.

Potential applicants can suggest topics they wish to research that are relevant to current equine welfare issues or that may benefit horses by improving knowledge of management or assessment of diseases or conditions.

The research can be undertaken anywhere in the UK and assistance at World Horse Welfare Centres is available if required.