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**Local Middle School Students Scrub In as Veterinarians for the Day, Exploring Veterinary Medicine Through Hands-on Immersive Experience and Training**

*Students Get Hands-on Experience Learning to Suture, Draw Blood, Conduct CPR and More at Believe and Belong in Veterinary Medicine Event, Nov. 7 and 8*

**ORLANDO, FL and SAN DIEGO, CA – Oct. 23, 2024** – Believe and Belong in Veterinary Medicine, a national education program created for middle school students in underrepresented communities, comes to San Diego, CA **Nov. 7 at [Logan Memorial Educational Campus](#) in San Diego and Nov. 8 at Montgomery Middle School ([Cajon Valley Union School District](#)) in El Cajon. Both events will run from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** Local students participating in the immersive, day-long event will learn alongside nationally recognized veterinarians and veterinary nurses/technicians, conduct physical exams on dogs, draw blood, perform CPR on veterinary models and gown up in surgical attire to learn about surgery. The event will help them prepare for a career in veterinary medicine.

Believe and Belong in Veterinary Medicine is presented by [blendVET](#), a nationally recognized veterinary certification program, and the [North American Veterinary Community](#) (NAVC), an international leader in veterinary continuing education. It was created to open the doors to a career in veterinary medicine for underrepresented students and address the lack of diversity in veterinary medicine. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 90% of veterinarians are white, with as few as 1.3% Black and 5.9% Asian. Latin X (ethnicity) is considered to be 7.9%.

“We are thrilled to return to San Diego to expand our student pathway programming in partnership with NAVC. Our mission to expose underrepresented students to veterinary medicine is more crucial than ever,” said Niccole Bruno, DVM, and blendVET founder and CEO.

“We aim to inspire and support the next generation of diverse veterinary professionals by fostering relationships with schools in the San Diego area. Representation matters, and our programs provide invaluable exposure and support to students who may not see themselves reflected in this field.”



At last year's Believe & Belong in Veterinary Medicine event at Logan Memorial Educational Campus School, veterinary instructor Courtney Campbell, DVM, DACVS-SA showed students proper surgery techniques.

**The Nov. 7 and 8 events include four exciting hands-on immersion stations:**

- **General Practice**, where students will learn how to perform a physical exam, dentistry, nail trimming and diagnostic testing.
- **Emergency Medicine**, where students learn how to perform CPR, bandage wounds, practice phlebotomy or draw blood on a model and which household items and foods are harmful to pets.
- **Surgery**, where students will step into the OR by gowning up, learning basic suture techniques and how to repair broken bones.
- **Shelter Medicine**, where they will learn the importance of vaccinations and spaying/neutering animals to prevent serious diseases and how to test for canine parvovirus through a partnership with the San Diego Humane Society.

“At NAVC, we are committed to ensuring that every child, no matter their background, has the chance to explore the rewarding and diverse world of veterinary medicine,” said NAVC CEO Gene O’Neill. “Through our partnership with blendVET and these events, we provide a familiar learning environment for students to gain practical experience and mentorship from industry professionals, and advance NAVC’s commitment to support and promote DEI within the veterinary profession.”



Students learned about the skeletal system at last year's Believe & Belong in Veterinary Medicine event.

Educational sessions will focus on various topics related to the different career paths in veterinary medicine and a day in the life of a veterinary professional. There will also be sessions on the next steps for students interested in a veterinary career by providing resources to veterinary summer camps, scholarship programs, in-clinic shadowing and more.

Participants will be presented with a certificate verifying they have earned six hours of education in veterinary medicine.

### **About the NAVC**

The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and advancing veterinary professionals worldwide. As the world’s leading provider of continuing veterinary education, the NAVC delivers essential training, tools and resources for veterinary professionals to stay abreast of advances in animal medicine and provide the best care for animals everywhere. Through its commitment to innovation and excellence, the NAVC has developed a diverse portfolio of products and services, including educational events, headlined by VMX (Veterinary Meeting & Expo), the world’s largest, most comprehensive continuing education conference and launchpad for new products and

innovations within the veterinary industry; VetFolio.com, a robust digital platform for virtual learning and engagement; NAVC Media, the veterinary industry's largest and award-winning portfolio of trade publications; and Embrace, an advocacy arm which unites the veterinary community and pet lovers. The NAVC was founded in 1982 and is headquartered in Orlando, FL. Since 2017, the NAVC has been recognized annually as one of the Top Workplaces by the Orlando Sentinel. To learn more about the NAVC's products and brands, visit <https://navc.com/>. To see our schedule of upcoming events, visit <https://navc.com/calendar/>.

### **About blendVET**

blendVET is a veterinary certification program in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB). It is founded, owned and backed by a diverse group of leaders in veterinary medicine. blendVET is the first program designed to create an inclusive workplace culture geared toward fostering environments of belonging for teams and clients and creating the next generation of diverse veterinary professionals through student and parent programming.

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