

YTI unveils new veterinary tech program

By LAUREN McLANE For the Daily Record/Sunday News York Daily Record/Sunday News

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For years, the government has been warning people about a dwindling supply of doctors. But it's not just people doctors who are in demand -- animal doctors are, too.

The Bureau of Labor and Statistics estimates there are 61,400 veterinary jobs in the U.S., and projects that the field will grow by 36 percent next year.

"There is a critical shortage of veterinarians and vet techs are the organizational backbones of practices," YTI Career Institute CEO Tim Foster said Wednesday night at the ribbon cutting ceremony for YTI's new veterinary technician program.

The first round of the program starts in early February and has 24 admitted students, according to Carla Horn, president of the YTI York Campus. Completion of the 21-month program will result in a specialized associate's degree in veterinary technology, Horn said.

The school had been exploring the program for more than two years, she added, but had only broken ground in the spring of 2012.

Full capacity in the program is 180 students, with rolling admission. Students will be on campus from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. four days a week. The program will have new start dates quarterly, in February, May, August and November, according to program director Kari Herchelroth.

Herchelroth joined the staff of YTI after leaving her job as a certified veterinary technologist -- the difference between technologist and technician is that technologists have four-year bachelor's degrees and technicians have two-year associates' degrees -- with Donegal Animal Hospital in Mount Joy.

"I'm excited that this will increase the standard of veterinary care in the area. I'm excited to teach, to share my knowledge. I think this is great," she said.

"This is a career-oriented college that emphasizes hands-on experience taught from people who have been in the field. That's what you need. You're going to see this every day in practice," she added.

The program will initially focus on small and large animals -- everything from mice to horses -- and will eventually grow to include exotic animals such as birds and lizards.

Brittany Jones, 19, who is enrolled in the inaugural class of the program, is thrilled the program has finally arrived.

"This is something I have been waiting for, for a year and a half, ever since I graduated from high school. When it finally did, I jumped on it. I've always wanted to [do this]," she said.