

# Five Networking Tips For Students On The Path to Vet Path

Networking can seem daunting, but is the key to unlocking an array of experiences

Amy Richardson<sup>1</sup>, Nicola M.A. Parry<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Institute of Veterinary Science, University of Liverpool; <sup>2</sup> Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University

The best insight into a career in pathology comes from shadowing and communicating with pathologists

## 1. Start Early

- Experience leads to experience
- Each contact comes with a wealth of knowledge and a network of their own
- Give yourself time to take advantage of as many opportunities as you can
- Don't be afraid to ask, the worst someone can say is no!



Here I met Dr Nigel Hicks

2017: Northern Zoological Symposium hosted at the University of Bristol



Dr Nigel Hicks BVSc, MRCVS and Sara Hicks BA (Hons) Co-founders of OVAID (Orangutan Veterinary Aid)

Nigel introduced me to Dr Steve Unwin



Steve Unwin BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, EBVS, ECZM Zoo Health Management Primate Microbiome State Of The Apes Wildlife Impact OVAG



I never thought I'd be face-painting with specialists in Bornean Primatology!

2020: Drh Kusuma and Drh Wibisono participated in an exchange at the University of Liverpool



Drh Arga Sawung Kusuma and Drh Andika Pandu Wibisono invited me to dinner

At dinner I met Taiana Costa



Dr Taiana Costa MV, PhD, MRCVS, AFHEA



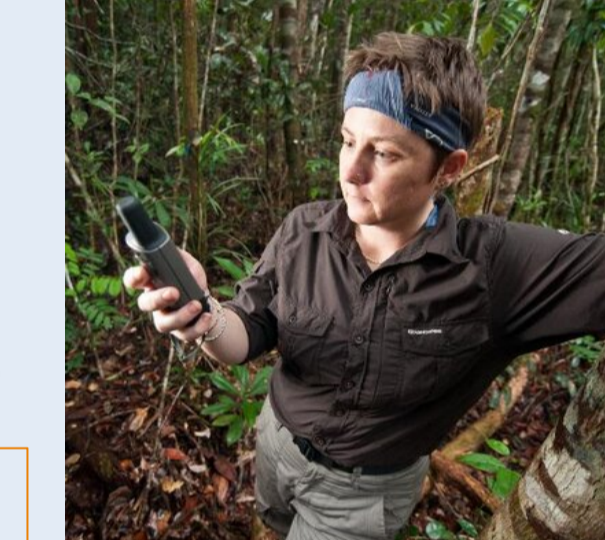
Taiana has been incredibly helpful to me, recommending a number of pathology books as well as the RVC Comparative Pathology Intercalation Course, which I am now enrolled in!

In 2018 Nigel invited me to join him and Sara in Borneo for one of the most incredible opportunities of my life!



OVAG (Orangutan Veterinary Advisory Group) Workshop 2018

Here I met Dr Susan Cheyne, who invited me to carry out a field research project in Borneo



Dr Susan M. Cheyne BSc (Hons), PhD, Cbiol, MIBiol, FRGS, FLS

Research Project: Study of the Relationship between Parasites and Behaviour in Bornean White-bearded Gibbons (*Hylobates albibarbis*) and Bornean Red Langurs (*Presbytis rubicunda*) (COVID-19 dependent)

## 2. Home-Ground Advantage

- You have easy access to the specialists at your school
- Each vet school's faculty has a vested interest in their own students' careers
- Ability to easily arrange informal meetings to discuss options and access career advice



Prof Julian Chantrey BSc, BVMS, PhD, FRCPath, Dipl. ECZM (Wildlife Population Health), FHEA, MRCVS

### Advice

- An informal Zoom meeting with Julian helped me decide between a pathology and wildlife intercalation
- He also gave me insight into potential career options post-university

### Home University Conferences

- At a One Health Conference, Emanuele Ricci lectured on Veterinary Forensic Pathology
- After this, I requested him as my third year research project supervisor
- It has been my favourite part of my course so far!



Dr Emanuele Ricci DVM, PhD

## 3. Never Miss an Opportunity

### Conferences

- Occur worldwide
  - I have attended conferences in England, Scotland, Poland and Borneo
- Most are online at the moment, so you don't have to leave your living room!
  - This means no accommodation or transport costs
- Don't be scared to go on your own!
  - Your friends won't always have the same interests; conferences are the perfect place to meet people who do!
- For cheaper options, conferences are often discounted at your home institution. And don't forget guest lectures set up by your Universities' societies
- Ask lecturers for contact details to set up meetings on career/placement options

I booked a competitive placement with IZVG for 2023 through Dr Daniela Denk, who I met at the Glasgow Northern Zoological Symposium 2020

### Meetings

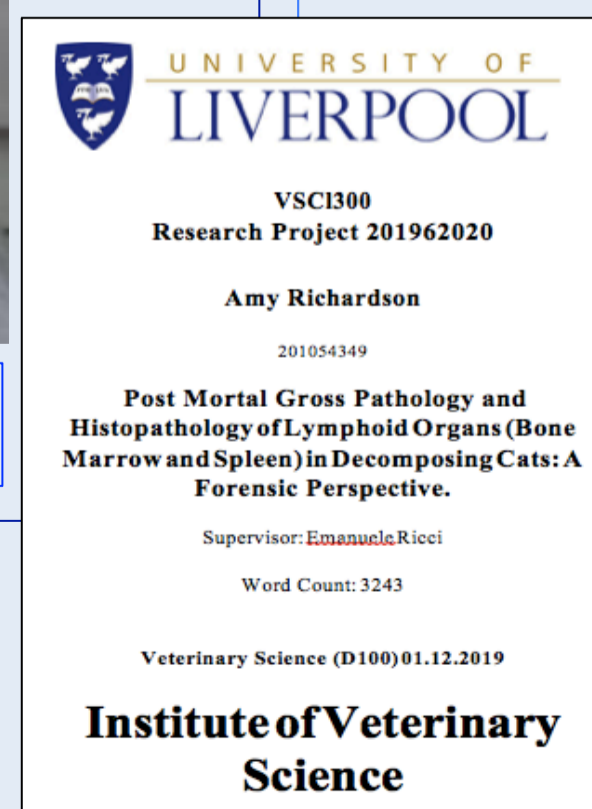
- Set up meetings to discuss your options:
  - Future career
  - Best routes to achieve your goals
  - Pros and cons of educational options (PHD, Residency, Intercalation, etc)

### Clinical Experiences

- Practical learning environment
- Trust leads to more hands on experiences: let the practice get to know you
- Variety looks good on your CV

### Research Placements

- Options available worldwide
- Can be tailored to your interests
- Great additions to your CV
- Equips you with valuable skills applicable to all aspects of the field



Supervisor: Emanuele Ricci 'Post Mortal Gross Pathology and Histopathology of Lymphoid Organs (Bone Marrow and Spleen) in Decomposing Cats: A Forensic Perspective.'

## 4. Go Virtual

Social media holds a plethora of potential contacts with similar interests. This could expand a student's network worldwide.



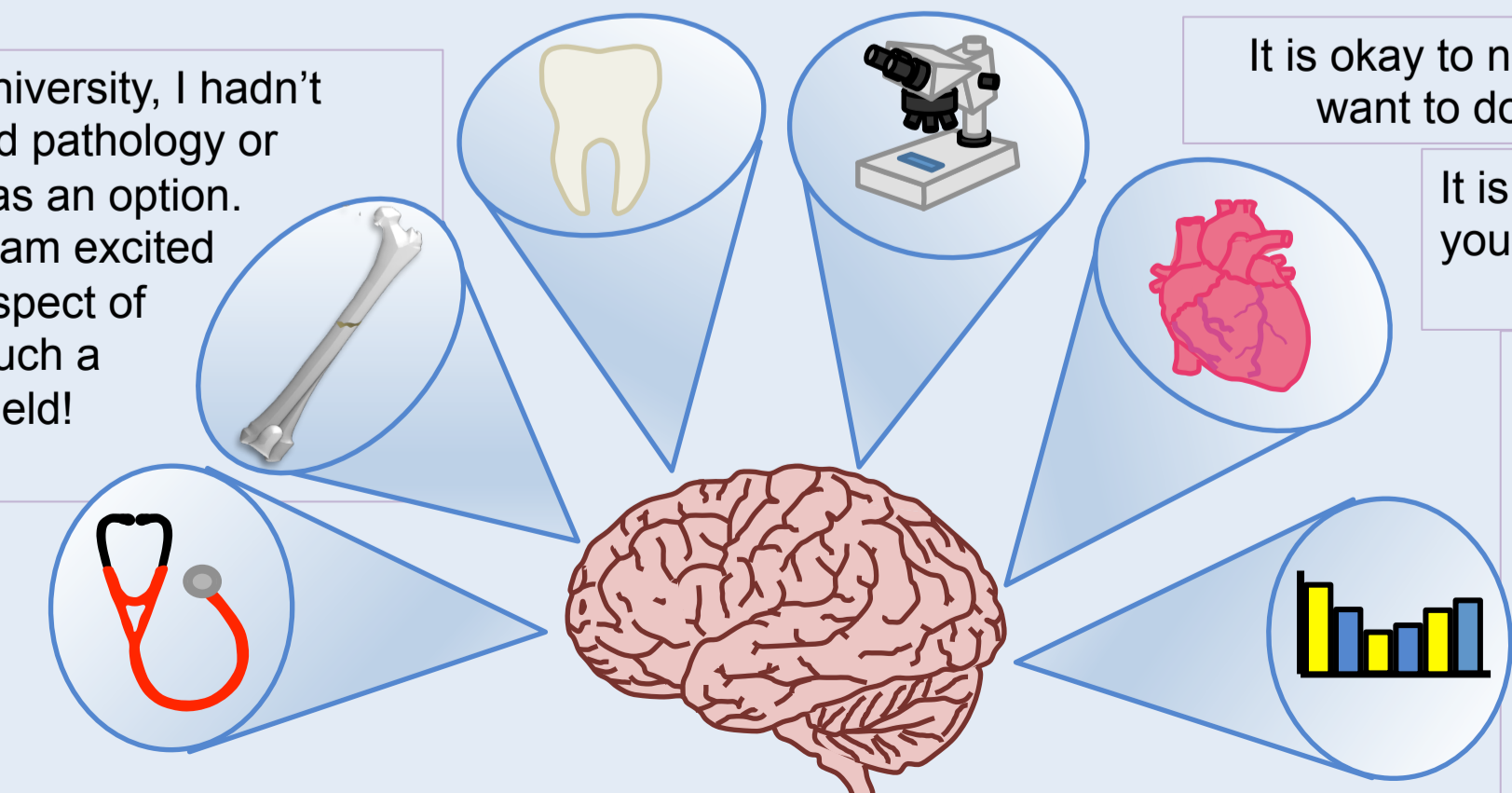
Zoom call with Dr Nicola Parry BSc (Hons), MSc, BVSc (Hons), DACVP, FRCVS

- I found Dr Nicola M. Parry on the Facebook page 'Vets: Stay, Go, Diversify'
- We set up a Zoom call to discuss educational/career options in America
- A day later she emailed me with a proposal: to submit an abstract to an international pathology conference
- Next thing I know, I'm here presenting a poster!!

## 5. Be Open-Minded

Explore opportunities beyond personal interest; the catalyst for a future career may be unexpected

Prior to University, I hadn't considered pathology or research as an option. But now I am excited at the prospect of being in such a dynamic field!



It is okay to not know what you want to do at this stage!

It is okay to change your mind at any point!

Knowledge from one specialism could be invaluable in another: delve into all aspects of the profession to be the most rounded vet you can be!

Figure: Daniel Lewis, MBiolSci (Zoology)

## Don't Be Afraid of Setbacks

It may be an opportunity in disguise!

- My re-sit year enabled me to request a Forensic Pathology project
- This aided my application to the Intercalated Comparative Pathology BSc at RVC
- My re-sit year was hugely positive and changed my entire career goal!