

Vet Voices: A Conversation with Dr. Michelle Vitulli

A VPP Community Spotlight

As the original founder of Caring Hands Animal Hospital, Dr. Vitulli has been a member of the Veterinary Practice Partners community since April 2023.

Q: What attracted you to a partnership with VPP?

A: My animal hospital, Caring Hands, grew from a company of five staff and one location to more than 250 staff, eight locations, and seven partners. Over time, achieving our vision of creating ownership opportunities for veterinarians became more difficult as Caring Hands grew more complex and struggled operationally. So, we started looking for a company that shared our vision and mission – one that could help us specifically with HR, recruiting, organizational challenges, and continued growth. We were fortunate that we became partners with VPP in April 2023. VPP offered us a true partnership model, where we retain clinical autonomy, brand integrity, our culture, while gaining operational support to secure our long-term legacy.



Q: How has VPP's support helped you balance clinical duties with practice management?

A: Partnering with VPP provides an extra level of security in preserving the quality of care in our hospitals. As a community with dozens of clinics and hundreds of doctors, VPP is able to drive profitability by procuring better pricing for drugs and supplies than independently owned hospitals. VPP is also able to provide efficiencies in staffing, recruiting, HR, and operations by promoting best practices in business. All of this allows veterinarians at Caring Hands the time to focus on clinical responsibilities – their most important responsibility! – because they know VPP is assisting us in managing the business aspects of our practices.

Q: As a female practice owner, how can we address the lingering gender gap in veterinary leadership?

A: Women comprise more than 50% of veterinarians. I would love to see the number of female-owned hospitals more closely reflect this percentage. Most VBMA students are female, however, female practice ownership, although growing, is far from prevalent in our profession. When I was looking for a partnership that aligned with the Caring Hands mission and values, I came across VPP. As an organization, 58% of VPP's doctor partners are female. VPP was able to provide us with the resources to empower our entire team of associate veterinarians and offer them ownership opportunities.

Q: What advice would you give to veterinarians seeking pathways to practice ownership?

A: Whether you are a student seeking professional support, an associate looking for a path to ownership, a hungry veterinarian ready to build your own dream practice, or a seasoned doctor nearing retirement, I encourage you to consider a partnership or employment opportunities at VPP. From onboarding to continuing education and leadership academies, VPP is shaping the future of veterinary medicine and veterinary ownership. They know that their ongoing success comes from developing and celebrating the next generation of clinical professionals.