



Vet Voices: A Conversation with Dr. Michelle Rudd

A VPP Community Spotlight

As a member and Co-Owner of Annapolis Cat Hospital, Dr. Rudd has been a member of the VPP community since December of 2022.

Q: How would you describe your career path in the veterinary field?

A: I always knew I wanted to be a veterinarian, starting as a high school veterinary assistant and working my way up to becoming a trained technician. I fulfilled my dream by graduating from Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine. After an internship focused on small animal medicine and surgical skills, I joined the teams at the Annapolis Cat Hospital and Bay Ridge Animal Hospital for almost 10 years. I was there before the VPP partnership, when the practice was still privately owned.

Although I considered buying the practice from its original founder-owner at one point, the timing wasn't right. I also worked as a self-employed relief veterinarian and as a full-time associate in Crofton, Maryland, before returning to the Annapolis Cat Hospital and Bay Ridge Animal Hospital.



Q: What motivated you to pursue practice ownership? How did VPP help?

A: I have always been interested in owning a practice, and I dreamed of creating a place that would provide quality medicine in a compassionate manner. My vision was to own a practice that I would want to take my own pets to. I discovered VPP through my friendship with the Practice Manager at Annapolis Cat Hospital. When the hospital became part of the VPP community and the original owner retired, she reached out to me with the idea of coming back as Medical Director and partnering with VPP.

I was a little skeptical of the idea at first, but I heard nothing but good things about VPP. Ultimately, working with VPP made it so easy to partner. One of the hardest things about obtaining practice ownership is the financial aspect. VPP helped connect with me the bank that provided me the loan needed to partner. Everyone I worked with was so helpful and made the whole process very easy. VPP truly cares about the people they employ. They want to help veterinarians like me create a practice where our staff can be valued and our patients can be provided with the best care possible.

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

A: If you're considering practice ownership, I would highly recommend partnering with VPP. Veterinary medicine has changed dramatically in the past 10-15 years, and trying to create a privately-owned practice or buying a privately-owned practice is more difficult now. With their innovative model of partnership, VPP allows veterinarians like me to have a vested interest in the practice, while keeping veterinary medicine in the hands of veterinarians.

Partnering with a corporation such as VPP allows us veterinarians to focus on the medicine, without worrying about the stressful aspects of business ownership – such as finances, marketing, payroll and other operational aspects. Being part of a corporation also allows staff members to have quality benefits that might be harder to offer as a private practice.