

**ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE**  
**Project Proposal Form:**  
**Summer Research Assistantship**



**ONTARIO**  
**VETERINARY COLLEGE**

**1. BASIC INFORMATION**

**Advisor Name:** Claire Jadrine

**Department:** Pathobiology

**Proposed Start Date:** 2019-05-06

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR STUDENT APPLICATIONS**

**Name:** Sarah Robinson

**Phone Extension:** 54662

**Email:** srobin18@uoguelph.ca

**2. DETAILS OF PROJECT**

**Title of Proposed Project:**

Evaluating the utility of pest control companies as a source of samples for pathogen surveillance in urban rats

**Outline of Proposed Research Project (please keep concise, approximately ½ page or less):**

Rats (*Rattus norvegicus* and *R. rattus*) are common inhabitants of urban environments and live in close association with humans around the world. Rats are known to carry a number of significant zoonoses and the importance of rat-associated zoonotic diseases is expected to increase as more people move into urban areas. To determine the prevalence of rat-associated zoonotic pathogens in Ontario we require samples from rats; however, trapping rats to obtain samples for testing is costly, time-consuming, and labour-intensive. Our objective is to assess the utility of pest control companies as a source of samples for rat-associated zoonotic pathogen surveillance. Rat carcasses will be obtained from pest control companies working in 4 urban areas in Ontario (Hamilton, Toronto, Windsor, and Ottawa) in 2019. Carcasses will be frozen at -24C until necropsy. The summer research student will be involved in all aspects of this project, including communicating with pest control companies, obtaining carcasses, assessing carcass quality, performing necropsies, and collecting samples for pathogen testing. The student will work closely with graduate students and CWHC staff and will participate in weekly wildlife lab meetings and journal club. The student will also be encouraged to participate in the summer CORE program. Proof of protective rabies titre is required prior to the start date.

**3. AVAILABLE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Select assistantship most relevant to the proposed research project (multiple boxes may be checked).

Please note restrictions.

**Andrea Leger Dunbar Summer Research Assistantship:**  
No restrictions

**James and Marjorie Pinkney Research Scholarship:**  
Projects in *animal health and welfare*, restricted to veterinary students

**OVC Summer Research Studentship:**  
Restricted to veterinary students

**Boehringer Ingelheim (previously Merial) Veterinary Scholars Program:**  
Projects in *veterinary medicine*, restricted to veterinary students