

## 2017 Department of Biology Awards

### IVAN G. PALMBLAD SCHOLARSHIP

*Forrest Jensen*



My name is Forrest Jensen. I am 24 years old, married, but no children yet. My wife and I are excited to start our family and to raise them to be well-rounded individuals that can understand and relate to many people. I was raised in Orem, UT by wonderful parents. My father had just graduated from here at USU just before I was born. He graduated with a degree in wildlife management and went to work for the non-game division of the now DWR. We grew up rehabilitating many animals: from barn owls, desert tortoises, to great horned owls. It is easy to see from this list alone where I got some of my love for wildlife from. After the non-game division was dis-funded he worked in sales for many years. He and my mother took us on vacation to things that interested them. It was always places that we learned so much from. We went to Yellowstone a few times, Mesa Verde, arches, glacier, etc. Eventually, we had made it to all the national and state parks and monuments. These trips to places and every year experiences in hunting fishing and hiking; cemented a love of discovering how the world works. Particularly for me about the things that make life work and work together in harmony.

In school, I was always a top student because of this innate and learned love of science. I always wanted to know why things happened the way they do. As I went through school I took the harder class route. For most of those classes, the only opportunities were in advanced biology classes. Honors biology, College biology, Biotechnology, AP Environmental science. It was this majority of my high school classes that were focused on biology that got me started off in a biology type degree.

My first major in college was environmental science. I was and still am very concerned about how we as people and corporations treat the life and ecosystems around us. To me, it is vital to try to minimize our damage of them while still benefiting from their use. It is a hard balance that I will always be concerned about.

I student taught at snow college and learned there that I loved to explain how things work, why they work, and how it applies to everyone. I decided after that semester that I wanted to do that for a living. Then the two pictures came together and I decided on a biological composite degree. I am already trying to find resources and lesson ideas for future classes and I haven't even begun most of my education (STEP) classes. I am taking them these next two semesters.

I also want to break the stereotype that athletes aren't smart. I played basketball and high school and developed a joy of the game and what it taught me. I plan on coaching at whatever high school I get a job at. I want to help my athletes be students first and athletes second. I want to help them make the most of their time in high school.