

2017 Department of Biology Awards

DATUS M. HAMMOND GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Elisa Lauritzen, Doctoral Candidate



I am proud to say that I am first and foremost a wife and mother. I had the good sense to marry the love of my life and explore the world with him through his military service. We have three incredible daughters who keep us on our toes, make us laugh and remind us how precious life is. These four people are the primary reason I am working toward a graduate degree.

For as far back as I can remember graduate school has been a goal of mine and I am thrilled to currently be working toward a master's degree at Utah State University (USU). I graduated summa cum laude with my undergraduate degree in Horticulture from USU in 2013 and have since had wonderful opportunities to employ that skill set in both my personal and professional life. Due in part to my love of trees and employment opportunities, I am an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist and maintain through them a Tree Risk Assessment Qualification.

I love being outdoors and enjoy hiking, gardening and traveling but equally enjoy indoor activities like reading and cooking. I manage several private gardens in Utah County, work as a consulting arborist and assist with my parent's raspberry farm in Idaho. Additionally, I have been able to share my love of reading by volunteering to read with school-age children through AmeriCorps and have worked to instill a love of gardening in others by teaching several classes through USU Extension and Central Utah Gardens.

Upon completion of my master's degree next spring, I plan to begin working toward a PhD and later plan to work with the Extension Service. An internship in a related field was a required part of my undergraduate Horticulture degree program and I had the good fortune to work with the USU Extension office in Utah County with people whom I will always consider family. During my time as an intern and later, as a regular employee, I had countless opportunities to educate patrons, rub shoulders with growers, work with school-age children and participate in research. No two days were ever the same and each brought their own challenges and opportunities for learning on my part. I loved my time with Extension and look forward to again making it part of my life.