

2020 Department of Biology Awards

IVAN G. PALMBLAD SCHOLARSHIP

Jeffrey Adams, Biology



In first grade, my parents took me to a planetarium. At the planetarium, I instantly fell in love with science. I would often read children's science books rather than story books when my class went to the library. Then in middle school, I had a wonderful biology teacher named Mr. Griffin. He was the first teacher I had that got me interested in biology specifically. He was also the one

who suggested that I join the Science Olympiad team. I meddled in the Microbiology event. The Microbiology event consisted of studying with a partner and then on the day of the event, you and your partner would take a test together. However, my partner was sick that day and because we were a small team, I had to take the test by myself.

In High School, I continued to participate in Science Olympiad and I was elected as the Co-President of our team. Our advisor, the other co-president, and I helped our team organize their tasks and hopefully medal in their events, which several did. High School was also where I gained an interest in Mandarin Chinese which is currently my minor at USU.

After a brief service mission, I began attending classes at Snow College. I joined the school's Bio Club and In my last semester there, I was elected club president. I also became a school tutor for the Biol 1610 class as well as a Mandarin tutor. At Snow, I got my first research experience as well. There is an area near the Utah-Nevada border near St. George UT that suffered a fire in 2005. After the fire, the area was divided in two. One half was seeded with plants native to the area. The other half was allowed to naturally regenerate. Our class gathered data on the species present and ground cover for both areas. We then analyzed our data and found that the seeded area had a higher diversity and more ground cover than the control area.

At USU, I have been working with Dr. Gallinat and Dr. Pearse on digitizing and analyzing some phenological data from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This data was found in paper form in a retired professor's office. I made a program that used an OCR to read the data on the page onto a spreadsheet. A very preliminary analysis has shown that spring temperature has a larger effect on spring events than autumn temperatures have on autumn events. It's also shown that closely related species respond similarly to seasonal temperature and events.

In the future, I hope to be able to continue researching in biology. I find the work fulfilling and hope that it has the potential to help others.