

## 2020 Department of Biology Awards

### DAVID B. DROWN SCHOLARSHIP

*Caden Diderickson, Public Health*



As a kid we are always asked what we want to be when we grow up. I know that for me it was always a question that was easily answered, but consistently changed with time. It seemed that at every stage of my life, I would tell people something different. As a kid it was a policeman or firefighter. Eventually it evolved to Nuclear Engineer or a Doctor. It was always something that sounded like it would be a nice profession or something exciting, but in reality, I had little to no knowledge about any of these studies. Even when I was applying for college I didn't know what I wanted to be. I had an answer that I would tell people

but I never knew if it was really what I wanted. Upon entering college, I decided to go into the college of science. Pre-Med had always sounded like a good route with lots of options, so I followed that route. Luckily, through family connections, someone recommended the Public Health Major. It seemed like the perfect plan B at the time. Go to school, get my degree, and continue on to medical school. I didn't necessarily think I would like or dislike public health, I just saw it as the means to get into a Medical School. Little did I know that it would turn into something that I actually liked. Little did I know that it would cause me to completely rethink my original plan. Little did I know that plan B would soon become plan A. Throughout my schooling career Biology had always seemed interesting enough. Learning about the human body has always been a fascinating subject for me, but something was missing. I couldn't see myself doing research for the rest of my life or dealing with patients on a daily basis. I wanted to be able to make a difference for people by creating things to help them directly. This is where Public Health caught my attention. Protecting workers from chemical and biological hazards by discovering where those hazards exist and then creating the means to prevent those harmful exposures is what caught me and has kept my interest to this day. Post-graduation I hope to continue on to the University of Utah to pursue a Masters degree in their Industrial Hygiene program so that I can continue to learn and grow within Public Health. I hope to be able to be employed with a company that takes their worker safety seriously so that I can anticipate, recognize, evaluate, and control any workplace hazards that I may come across. By

doing that I hope that I can help workers make it home to their families every day and ensure that they aren't exposed to hazards today that could harm them in the future. As an Aggie I have had many opportunities to serve the community and my fellow Aggies. I have participated in President's Cabinet within the USUSA organization and was given the opportunity to provide activities for fellow Aggies as well as hosting events for the community. As well as I have had the opportunity to help in The Family Place here in Cache Valley.