

## 2020 Department of Biology Awards

### JOHN R. SIMMONS SCHOLARSHIP

*Nathan Johnson, Human Biology*



My name is Nate Johnson, and I am a junior majoring in Biology, with an emphasis in Human Biology, here at Utah State University. I am also planning on achieving minors in Chemistry and Criminal Justice. I have been named to the Dean's list for outstanding academic performance since spring semester of 2019. My career goal is to become a

forensic scientist with the Utah Department of Public Health, helping police departments around the state ensure that criminals are apprehended, justice is done, and innocent lives are protected. I am currently a member of the Freeman neurobiology lab here on campus, where we are working to map oxytocin and vasopressin receptors in the coyote brain, and analyze the effects of these neurotransmitters on pair bonding and other behaviors. This research also has implications for human biology in the treatment of autism, schizophrenia, and other disorders. I am a non-traditional student, having returned to school after a long absence. My wife and I have been very happily married for four years, and are parents to two fantastic children, a two-year-old son and a newborn daughter. We also own a very large and fluffy Great Pyrenees named Tank. My wife is a second-grade teacher and is also a graduate of Utah State, so we are a proud true-blooded Aggie family. We enjoy serving in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and spending time together, especially in the great outdoors. I am also an avid fisherman, hunter, and horseman. My wife and I are both natives to Cache Valley and are grateful to have our families nearby, and especially for their assistance with our kids while I am in school. We are also very thankful for the generous sponsorship of Mrs. Helen Simmons and family through the John R. Simmons scholarship.