

# STEM SPOTLIGHT

Bachelor of Science in Biology  
Middle Tennessee State University

**Q** How did you select your college major?

**A** I have always loved and been interested in the many different aspects of science. There were various career paths I was interested in pursuing, mostly involving wildlife, and decided that with a degree in Biology I would be able to branch out in various directions.

**Q** What was the biggest influence in your selection of major or career?

**A** I have always found interactions with wildlife to be rewarding. After an internship with TN State Parks I realized it was especially rewarding to introduce the public to wildlife. I loved seeing people's reactions when they came face-to-face with an animal, as well as the fact that I made a difference in how they viewed the natural world. Right then I knew I wanted a career that would help me form bonds between people and animals and working at Discovery Park of America lets me do exactly that.

**Q** If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college, what would it be?

**A** I took all the upper-level math classes that were available to me in high school and they helped me tremendously in college. I absolutely advise taking all available upper-level math and English classes.



**Kacey Putz**  
Aquarium & Wildlife Coordinator  
Discovery Park of America



**Q What is your favorite aspect of your job?**

**A** I love seeing children admiring, respecting, and learning from all of my hard work here at Discovery Park of America. As the Aquarium & Wildlife Coordinator one of my main responsibilities is to create wildlife exhibits that are exciting and stimulating while supplying all the needs for that particular animal.

**Q How do you/your company make a positive impact on society/our community?**

**A** Discovery Park of America offers the community a chance to come experience something they may never get the chance to experience. With our main mission being to educate, we offer visitors the chance to “see beyond” their current level of knowledge.

**Q What’s the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your professional career?**

**A** It has been interesting to learn that I have passions I never realized were there. When I was working with U.S. Fish & Wildlife in Arizona I was able to assist in their annual bird banding. During this process we came across a juvenile Red-Tailed hawk. His calmness, confidence, and grace were awe-inspiring. Until that morning, I never realized I had a passion for birds.

**Q What makes you get up each morning excited about your profession?**

**A** I am motivated by knowing that I have the chance to inspire young minds while caring for various types of wildlife. It is also particularly moving when the animals respond positively to me or my actions.

**Q What advice would you share with K-12 students that are considering your profession?**

**A** Do not pick a career solely with the motivation of making money. Follow your heart and work hard and you will find that life provides rich and rewarding experiences that cannot be bought. When you build a career around what you love you will love and enjoy life.