Writing Assignment 1: Personal Statement

My name is Madalyn Possich, though I typically go by Mady. I am from Chesapeake, Virginia, and I transferred from Tidewater Community College to ODU in August of 2024. I am a Marine Biology major, and my favorite animal is the Whale Shark, just in case you were wondering.

 My interest in the marine world started when I was very young. I like to say that once my mom showed me The Little Mermaid and Finding Nemo, I was hooked. I read mermaid books throughout elementary school, along with books about mythical marine creatures. I studied sharks, manatees, and coral reefs throughout school, making almost every subject for research papers be something in the marine world. One of my favorite movies is Jaws, and I also own a copy of the book, and it is one of my favorite books to read on the beach. I also had fishtanks growing up and liked to spend time watching them swim to relax. Due to this, one of my favorite places to spend an afternoon is in an aquarium. If you put me in an aquarium and let me just sit and stare at the fish and the sharks, I would be as happy as a clam, pun intended. Ironically, I have a horrible fear of open ocean and cloudy water, which I contribute to being stung by a jellyfish while on vacation in Hilton Head Island. My fear has not stopped me from trying to make a career for myself working with the creatures I have always been fascinated with.

Last year, from August 2023 through July 2024, I was a part of the Disney College Program. I was put in food service at the Boardwalk Inn, and it was an absolute dream come true for me. Not the food service, as I never saw myself working food service, but being able to work for Disney. During my program, I was able to take part in classes that helped with hospitality skills and learn about different programs that Disney offered by attending lectures taught by Disney cast members that worked in those fields and programs. I saw my College Program as my first step into the company that I ultimately would like to make my career in.

Disney has an extraordinary rescue and rehabilitation program that mainly involves sea turtles, manatees, and dolphins. If you have ever visited Walt Disney World and gone to The Seas pavilion in EPCOT, the dolphins and manatees that you can visit are a part of this rescue and rehabilitation program. You may have even gotten the opportunity to watch the manatees munch on a head of lettuce, which is freshly grown in EPCOT in The Land pavilion, which is one of my favorite things to see at Disney World. These animals are housed there at The Seas, and while they are in Disney’s care they are also able to help educate guests on different species and how the guest can personally help protect their homes. The ultimate goal for my career is to be a part of this rescue and rehabilitation program. I see being a part of this program as my way to give back to the environment and the marine creatures that I have loved since I was little. As Disney’s rescue and rehabilitation program is one of the best on the planet, obviously I would want to help make a life and career for myself with their program. My next step to get into this program at Disney is to try and secure a spot in one of their marine internships. When this happens, as I am hopefully that it will, I will be one step closer to being able to better the lives of the marine creatures while working at Disney World, which is my happy place. My ultimate career goal would be to a mermaid, but as this is not possible, working with this program is the next best thing.

 I strongly believe that you should make your career something that not only interests you, but also something that makes you happy. That is why I chose to go into Marine Biology. I love these animals, and I want to help them and the fascinating world that they call home.