

## Personal Statement, Jacob Cahill

Since I was a young child, I have felt compassion and deep concern for animals and our environment. I knew that I wanted to grow up to help protect animals in some way. At first, I thought I wanted to be a veterinarian, but the thought of euthanizing someone's pet and the restriction of an office did not appeal to me. I'd have to consider other avenues for my future. I was bummed that I might end up with a job that I wasn't passionate about, that would be a chore to go to every day.

My grandmother jokes that I learned to swim before I could walk. We live next to the Shenandoah River and visit the Outer Banks and Chincoteague regularly. I feel most at home near the water. So, when I was in high school and seriously considering the question "What do you want to do when you grow up?" I thought about my two real passions, animals and the water. What could I do that combined both of those?

I took and Environmental Sciences class in high school and started doing personal research. I knew that I wanted to study Marine Biology. My dad had attended Old Dominion and I knew that the school had a program and provided a good location for studying marine sciences. I hope to mostly be engaged in field work. I am working on my scuba certification and hope to complete my small craft certification as well. The two classes I have enjoyed the most while studying at Old Dominion University are Ichthyology and Invertebrate Zoology, the reason I enjoyed these two classes so much is because of the lab portions which gave me hands on experience with specimens and allowed me to preform and experience different ways of collecting data and using different modes of capturing specimens in the field. The experiences I gained from these two classes helped me understand what would be expected from me if I decide to pursue one of these two fields in the future, both of these classes helped me understand just how vast Marine Biology really is.

My love of animals and the water led me to pursue a degree in Marine Biology. I know that when I go to work, I will be helping protect the habitats of marine animals and our planet through observation and research.