

My name is Kyla Miller and I am a senior in the Bachelor of Art's Biology program. Science captivated me at an early age, giving me an admiration and respect for those in the field that has driven me to pursue it as a career. I graduated high school in 2010 and enrolled in Tidewater Community College in 2011, where I obtained a Career Studies Certification in Personal Training and Fitness. I continued at TCC for several more years in the Social Sciences program before transferring to Old Dominion University as a Biology major. I am now several semesters away from graduating, but I plan to continue at ODU for a master's in biology as well. Upon completion of my Master's, my goal is to transfer to a graduate school where I will be able to get my PhD in Zoology. I have always been interested in a variety of branches of science, so it was difficult to decide what career path to choose. I chose biology because it encompasses all living things and the way they interact with each other. My main focuses have been animal science and exercise science, which lead me to studying personal training and fitness at TCC. As a biology major, I am building upon that knowledge to gain a deeper understanding of physiology as a personal trainer. I want to work with people in ways that they can better their health, but I didn't feel the medical field was for me. I have taken several classes pertaining to first aid, CPR, AED training and nutrition to ensure I am prepared to help anyone in case of injury or to help build a diet and fitness plan. Being a personal trainer and a biologist are career paths I am pursuing, but my main goal is to be a Zoologist working with exotic animals. With a master's in biology and a PhD in Zoology, I will have a lot of options as a Biologist or a Zoologist. I would like to work mostly in conservational efforts such as rehabilitation and repopulation of endangered species. I want to study and help animals to live in their natural habitats as much as possible. There are so many endangered animals that are slowly becoming extinct or are only seen in captivity. My mission is to help repopulate these endangered species and reintroduce them to the wild in an effort to combat extinction wherever possible. This could include working at a conservation center or traveling to another part of the world for a period to help during disasters, such as when the fires in Australia greatly impacted the wildlife in that area. I could also work in a lab setting, studying cells, evolutionary changes, genetic mutations or environmental effects on populations of animals in a given area. While in college, I have worked a variety of jobs in food service before getting a job construction with a focus on carpentry. In 2017, I began working as a licensed security agent for local events and festivals nationwide. After a couple of years I began working in the production department of events, where I am now a stagehand for most major venues in Hampton Roads. I specialize in lighting, audio, video, carpentry, electrics and props. I have been working full time, as well as going to school full time for the majority of my education. I have had to take some semesters off, but I have accumulated 142 credits between both schools and will have my Bachelor's degree in a couple more semesters. While I look forward to graduating each step of the way, I wonder if I will actually want to stop attending school once I finish my PhD. I love learning and have so many more classes and subjects I would love to study. For my minor, I am considering photography. I have taken a handful of art classes along the way and love photography as a hobby. As a zoologist, I will be around a lot of exotic or endangered animals. Most people don't have the ability to be this close and the best way to spread awareness is through photos, videos and social media. This will be a great way for me to network with others in the field and to share the things I am able to discover or do to help

animals with the world. With a lot of hard work and dedication, I hope that in 5 years I will be Dr. Kyla Miller, Zoologist.