Zachary Bailey, 25, (Klamath) graduated this May with a degree in Zoology. He is currently in Gelnhausen, Germany, working with endangered species at the Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum in their conservation genetic department.

Bailey is in Germany as part of a research assistantship he received through the University of California at Santa Cruz Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) Program. He'll be abroad for five months.

Bailey plans to go to grad school and then pursue his doctorate, but first he's taking a year off and getting some experience in his field.

"I would like to see myself being a researcher, either working for a pharmaceutical or biotech company or working at a university doing research in epidemiology," Bailey said.

He said that deciding which field he wanted to get into was a "gradual process." He has always been interested in all of the sciences, and noted that he used to watch a lot of wildlife videos and documentaries by BBC.

He took a zoology class, and his passion grew from there. Bailey said, "I switched from doing zoology purely from a scientific point of view to doing it more from a "medical point of view." He has a focus in animal care.

In his time at WSU, Bailey was an honor student.

"The honors program here at WSU is a thesis driven program, which is meant to mirror in some aspects what you would do in a master's or doctoral program if you were to choose to further your education," said Bailey.

For his thesis he "tested the passive immunotherapeutic capacity of avian derived egg-yolk antibodies for Colonization Associated Proteins (CAPs) against Campylobacter jejuni colonization of human intestinal cells (Caco-2 cells)."

For those of us who don't have a degree in zoology, that means he evaluated the use of anti-bodies from eggs as a form of treatment.

In addition to being an honor student, Bailey held two part-time jobs, and was very active with the veterinary programs on campus. Bailey was a student ambassador for the Native American Programs, and worked at McDonald's.

"I'm thankful that the Native Center exists. I really appreciated having that space that helped celebrate and signify my heritage as an American Indian," said Bailey.

"People understand a lot more about how you feel and where you're from," he added.

Bailey's advice for freshman students is, "Get involved early on, and don't be afraid to take risks."

"If you do something and you find out you don't like it, that's great information to have early on. Try to have as many opportunities as you can early on, but at the same time try to balance yourself."