Noah Nikaido

Noah works under Dr. Katrina Palmer in a Mathematics research cluster. He learned about the STEP Program from his high school principal at Watauga High School. Noah has developed a keen interest in finances, and when saw the topics to be researched, he realized the math, finances, and computer science skills he would learn would enhance and broaden his knowledge.

Noah’s research team has been working on retirement planning and the fundamental mathematical concepts involved in deriving sensible retirement plans. “I appreciate and have learned the most from the fact that retirement starts early in life—planning how to save and where to save.”

Not only has Noah learned how to work in a professional environment outside of the high school setting, but he has gained an in-depth experience of college-life and working with others. In fact, this fall Noah will be a part of ASU’s incoming freshman class! Upon graduation, Noah has aspirations to work in financial banking or law. If he currently had unlimited funding, he would try to “figure out a suitable and working plan for the current economic crisis.”

The purpose of the program is to encourage original thinking, to utilize available resources, and investigate the answers to mathematical and scientific problems. Noah comments, “it’s a great program and its intentions are the best for the students.”

Jasmine Ammon

Jasmine is a part of Dr. Shea Tuberty’s research team, focusing on biology and chemistry. This team just began working on how metal byproducts from December’s Tennessee Ash Spill affects rivers, fish, and the people nearby. Last semester provided Jasmine with a great deal of experience in a more structured research atmosphere as she assisted a graduate student in data collection. Jasmine plans to attend either Appalachian State or UNC-Asheville in the Fall. Following her undergraduate education, she hopes to pursue a PhD and work to find methods of protecting wild marine mammals from human waste. She would ideally like to explore and gather data by being out on the ocean waters to perform her research.

Jasmine learned about the STEP Program from her uncle who teaches at Appalachian in the Philosophy and Religion department. Attributing her current success to her aunt and uncle, Jasmine comments, “They motivated me to push myself as hard as I can. They’ve always been there for me.”

The program not only stimulates the mind through working with other students under the guidance of a faculty mentor, but it provides academic support. “The resources are a great thing to be involved with and the tutoring was a great thing in my first semester especially.”

For more information about the STEP program, please visit: www.cs.appstate.edu/step