

Alum Spotlight

Department of Environmental Sciences



Ben Kuhaneck: B.S. in Biology (2016)

Honors Thesis: "Altered Lake Erie Shorelines: Impacts of Vegetation the Near-shore Fish Community"

Ben Kuhaneck completed his undergraduate degree under the supervision of Dr. Christine Mayer. During his time, Ben conducted research on the impacts of the altered Lake Erie shorelines on near-shore fish communities by electrofishing and analyzing digital photographs. He won the People's Choice Award for his poster presentation of this research at the International Association for Great Lakes Research Conference in 2015. Ben graduated with departmental honors.

As a student, Ben was highly active in environmental projects both on- and off-campus. He received both the Elliot Tramer Environmental Sciences scholarship and the Rocket Scholar Award. Ben also participated in an international ecology field trip to Trinidad and volunteered in invasive species removal from Irwin Prairie and mollusk sampling efforts in the Maumee river.

After graduating, Ben worked as a West Coast Fisheries Observer with Alaskan Observers out of Seattle (WA). He then returned to Toledo to assist with UT Lake Whitefish research in Lake Erie as a student contractor for the U.S. Geological Survey. In May 2018, he traveled to Uganda as a Peace Corps Volunteer to help local farmers apply for grants as an agribusiness advisor.



"Getting professional experience while in school was a large factor of landing my post graduate jobs. My advice would be to go beyond the class experience. Such experience will greatly improve your chances to securing a job."