

Sara Sivils Bio
Animal Health Instructor

In high school I thought I wanted to be a veterinarian; thus how I ended up attending the University of Missouri - Columbia for my undergraduate degree. I starting doing all of the prep work (shadowing hours, required courses, etc.) in order to gain admission into Mizzou's vet program. Towards the end of my first semester, my interests in the animal health field changed. I quickly decided to change my major to pursue a career in wildlife conservation. I graduated with a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife with minors in 3 different areas (Captive Wild Animal Management, Animal Science, and Biology). I wanted to become a zookeeper so I could also educate the public about conservation. During my time at Mizzou I had a variety of experiences and internships. During my sophomore year, I studied abroad studying animal conservation in Thailand. In Thailand, I had the opportunity to participate in coral reef restoration, clouded leopard reproduction, and mangrove conservation. Due to my experience abroad I decided to spend a few weeks during the summer volunteering at an animal rehab facility working with Capuchin monkeys in Ecuador. The following year I became a teacher's assistant for my professor of Animal Physiology. I really enjoyed helping the current students in the class learn about what I found so fascinating! The summer before I graduated I had an internship at the St. Louis Zoo working with chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas. In addition to my animal experience, I also spent a few summers working at summer camps. My experience ranged from a cabin counselor and nature center specialist at YMCA Camp Lakewood to a nature camp counselor with the Smithsonian Conservation Institute in Front Royal, VA. I decided to go back and get my M.A. in Teaching from Lindenwood University. I felt I could leave a bigger impact on the world inspiring youth to join the field of animal health. After graduating I moved from St. Louis to Kansas City. I had a few long-term substitute positions before landing a full time job at Excelsior Springs teaching Biology. At Excelsior, I have enjoyed starting a new class educating students about Missouri Conservation. I am excited to continue my career and focus more on educating youth about the possibilities in animal health with Southland CAPS!