

Growing up in a farming family in northern Colorado, I quickly learned the importance of water. Communities in northern Colorado and beyond were established on the reliance and availability of water, that need and dependance on a stable water supply for agricultural and municipal life still exists and is more important now than ever. When we face years of low precipitation and drought, the foresight of the water systems developed in the 1800s still allows for flourishing life on the front range and the plains of Colorado to be possible. However, the need for and importance of water, flows well beyond the borders of Northern Colorado. Water is the life-line of our existence and as the Western United States is facing a decade-plus long drought, the problem of water scarcity is not a problem for tomorrow; instead we all need to use our voices and expertise today to educate on the importance of water through conservation and sustainable practices to ensure our agricultural needs and the co-existence with the urban population can continue to thrive.

Entering my junior year at Texas Tech, I have got to see firsthand how different environments, different locations, strive to manage water shortages to conserve our precious resource. I have had the opportunity to work in the Larimer and Weld Irrigation Company office during my time in high school as well as during my undergrad studies. I've been tasked with conducting historical research on water rights, being a part of the daily operations of delivering water to shareholders and also seeing the constant war that is being waged on farmers trying to earn a living and the pressure of development encroaching on their way of life. Learning the history of the water systems and water rights that are still in use today is truly fascinating. Through this experience, I grew my understanding of how water is regulated in Colorado and how the past has shaped the governance of water today.

As an Agricultural Communications undergraduate, I am learning how to effectively communicate the importance of water and agriculture to those who have never seen a water system beyond turning the faucet on and getting water at their fingertips. I believe the urgency for water advocacy is vitally important for the future of the United States. With the expiration of the Colorado River Compact of 1922, the need for water advocates with a deep understanding of the history and with plenty of foresight to see where our land is going is imperative.

This summer, I am working as a legal intern at Lawrence, Custer, Grasmick, Jones and Donovan, LLP., a law firm that specializes in Colorado Water Law. Working in a law office and researching water law has provided me with a deeper understanding of the complexities of water rights and the end users. Through my background in agriculture and work experiences, I know I want to use my passion and voice to be an advocate for water. After graduating from Texas Tech, I hope to lobby at the state and national levels to protect agricultural water and to be a positive voice for those who keep food on our tables and clothes on our backs. Working in the law office has also sparked my interest in possibly attending law school after finishing my undergraduate degree. As the population continues to grow, more people will become reliant on this already scarce natural resource. Being able to protect and preserve water for clients whose livelihoods depend on it, would be a very fulfilling career. Water is and will continue to be the future of our world. It will take passionate and dedicated advocates to ensure this resource is conserved for generations to come and I look forward to being that voice. I appreciate your time and would be extremely honored to be the recipient of your prestigious scholarship.