

Animal Dreams

First-year student sets sights on veterinary medicine

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Bailey Travers '23 decided she wanted to be a veterinarian before she knew exactly what that involved. She was young, 6 or 7 years old, when she first started asking questions about who takes care of animals. Soon after, that became her path.

Travers has fostered dogs, raises chickens and has a horse; she started riding when she was 5. She also has a herd of dairy goats and bred five this fall so she'll have more females to show through [4-H](#) during fair season next year.

"Joining 4-H really helped me flush out my interest in large animals," Travers says. It also earned her a scholarship from the youth organization.

An [animal science](#) major, Travers started raising chickens when she was in junior high. In seventh grade, she got her horse. Once she had her driver's license, she increased the flock and got other animals; being able to drive meant she could take on more responsibilities, like vet appointments. Around the same time, she was volunteering at the Oyster River Equestrian Center. In 2016, Travers started Sky's the Limit Farm. This is her third year having animals.

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“My high school had a really good animal science program. I took a lot of science classes,” Travers says. “During my senior year, I worked at the organic dairy. That gave me experience with cows that I hadn't had. I got to learn how to milk with a machine — I milk my goats by hand — and how to move a large herd.”

Travers joined 4-H in 2012. Last year, her younger sister, who has Down syndrome, joined her in showing animals at county fairs. “Being close to her is a big thing,” Travers says. “She's my best friend. I wanted her to be able to stay in 4-H and do the shows, so that was another good reason to come to UNH.”

In addition to all her animals, Travers played tennis for two years in high school, was on the Oyster River equestrian team for six, snowboards competitively and raises money for Cynthia's Challenge, an organization that helps ease the financial burden for children and their families associated with specialty medical needs.

Her parents both grew up in cities. Travers says the largest animal they ever had was a golden retriever. When she first began building her menagerie, they were cautious, not wanting to be burdened with the care of the animals if she lost interest. Her dedication was apparent when one of the dogs she fostered had diabetes and she had to give it insulin shots twice a day. But the real proof came when Travers spent 24 hours in the barn with a goat that was aborting its kid. After that, they knew she was committed.

“It's a small hobby that grew into a large passion,” Travers says of her animals. “My hope is to become a veterinarian and have a hobby farm. I think I'm off to a good start.”

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