

Kaitlyn Richards (She/Her/Hers)

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Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Master of Natural Resource Sciences (Specialization: Hydrological Sciences)

August 2024-Expected May 2026 | GPA: 3.00/4.00

Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies (Minors: International Agriculture and Natural Resources, Global Studies, Geography)

August 2021-May 2024 | GPA: 3.63/4.00

Bachelor of Science in Fisheries and Wildlife (Emphasis: Conservation Biology)

August 2021-May 2024 | GPA: 3.63/4.00

Experience

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Husker Pantry, Lincoln, NE

Graduate Research Assistant, August 2024-Present

- Develop and execute outreach strategies to connect with various student groups, enhancing pantry visibility and participation.
- Oversee inventory management by restocking shelves and maintaining accurate inventory records to ensure the availability of essential items.
- Recruit and supervise a diverse team of volunteers, improving operational efficiency and expanding the pantry's service capabilities.
- Establish and nurture partnerships with local organizations, resulting in increased donations and resource support for the pantry.
- Facilitate educational workshops and presentations on food insecurity, food waste, and related issues, fostering greater awareness and engagement within the campus community

Nebraska Recycling Council, Lincoln, NE

ArcGIS and Data Management Intern, May 2025-August 2025

- Utilized ArcGIS Pro and ArcGIS Online to create and maintain interactive maps tracking municipal recycling programs and grant distribution across Nebraska
- Managed and organized large datasets using Excel to ensure accurate reporting and data integrity
- Collaborated with team members to update and refine GIS layers and dashboards for stakeholder presentations

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

Summer Researcher, May 2025-August 2025

- Conducted research using ArcGIS to analyze and visualize spatial data
- Learned Python programming to support data manipulation, automation, and basic analysis tasks

University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Natural Resources, Lincoln, NE

Teaching Assistant, January 2025- June 2025

- Assist in instructing around 20 students, providing guidance on stream and river ecology concepts, field methods, and laboratory exercises.
- Facilitate hands-on lab sessions, supporting students with equipment usage, data collection, and stream and river ecosystems analysis.
- Coordinate the setup and preparation of lab materials and field equipment to ensure a smooth and organized learning environment.
- Grade assignments, quizzes, and lab reports, offering constructive feedback to help students improve their academic performance.

Center for Great Plains Studies, Lincoln, NE

Student Storyteller in Residence, August 2024- May 2025

- Produce and host episodes for the "Pride in the Plains" podcast, amplifying the voices of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Plains region.
- Conduct in-depth interviews and craft compelling narratives to highlight the unique experiences, challenges, and successes of queer individuals in often-overlooked areas.
- Research and develop content that explores LGBTQ+ identity, community, and resilience, contributing to a greater understanding of queer experiences in less-represented regions.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Housing and Dining, Lincoln, NE

Learning Community Peer Mentor, August 2023-May 2024

- Guided and supported incoming students within the LGBT Learning Community, offering a safe and inclusive space for them to navigate their college journey, address challenges, and celebrate their identities
- Facilitated the successful transition of incoming students by serving as a mentor within the learning community, providing guidance, support, and resources to foster their academic and personal growth

- Led regular group meetings and workshops to create an inclusive and engaging environment for mentees, focusing on topics such as time management, study skills, campus resources, and goal-setting
- Provided one-on-one mentorship to students, offering personalized advice, academic assistance, and a listening ear to address challenges and help them navigate their college journey

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Critical Zone Research Group, Lincoln, NE

Undergraduate Researcher, August 2023-May 2024

- Conducted hands-on fieldwork, collecting water and soil samples, analyzing data, and documenting observations, ensuring accurate and comprehensive data collection procedures
- Assisted in the execution of experiments aimed at assessing the effects of various pollutants on groundwater quality, demonstrating a strong understanding of experimental protocols and techniques
- Collaborated with interdisciplinary teams, including hydrologists, biologists, and geologists, fostering a cooperative environment that promotes diverse perspectives in problem-solving

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Office of Academic Success and Intercultural Services, Lincoln, NE

Learning Consultant, August 2023-May 2024

- Provided personalized academic support to a diverse range of students, offering guidance in study strategies, time management, and effective learning techniques to enhance overall academic performance
- Conducted one-on-one consultations with students to identify their unique learning needs and challenges, developing tailored action plans to address academic goals and improve subject mastery
- Employed active listening and empathetic communication to create a supportive and inclusive space where students feel comfortable discussing their academic concerns and aspirations

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Center for Advocacy, Response & Education (CARE), Lincoln, NE

Peer Educator, September 2022-May 2024

- Completed a 32-hour training program, mastering a diverse range of topics including interpersonal communication, bystander intervention, consent education, and trauma-informed support, equipping me with the necessary skills to excel as a Peer Educator
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of the UNL Center for Advocacy, Response & Education's Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence (SARV) program by collaborating with a diverse team of peer educators
- Participate in regular team meetings and training sessions, actively sharing insights and experiences to enhance the efficacy of the CARE Peer Educator program and maintain a high standard of education delivery

Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Boone, IA

Fisheries Seasonal Intern, May 2023-August 2023

- Assisted fisheries biologists in conducting comprehensive fish population surveys using various sampling techniques, contributing to the assessment and management of Iowa's aquatic ecosystems
- Played a hands-on role in collecting and analyzing biological data, including fish size, weight, and species composition, to determine the health and trends of local fish populations in lakes and rivers
- Engaged in electrofishing operations to capture and sample fish for research purposes, while adhering to safety protocols and contributing to the understanding of fish community dynamics
- Supported the stocking of fish species by participating in the transportation, handling, and release of fish into designated water bodies, aiding in the restoration and enhancement of recreational fishing opportunities
- Participated in the maintenance and calibration of fisheries equipment, such as boats, nets, and sampling gear, ensuring accurate data collection and the safe operation of field activities

Pioneers Park Nature Center, Lincoln, NE

Educational Exhibit Intern, March 2023-May 2023

- Actively participated in the setup and installation of the exhibit displays, employing practical skills to arrange artifacts and interactive elements in an engaging and organized manner
- Demonstrated a strong commitment to Pioneers Park Nature Center's mission and values, consistently striving to contribute to the center's educational initiatives and enhance its role within the local community
- Conducted in-depth research on the chosen exhibit topic, sourcing relevant information from reputable academic and scientific sources to ensure the accuracy and educational value of the content presented
- Demonstrated attention to detail by meticulously proofreading all exhibit materials, and verifying the accuracy of facts, grammar, and punctuation to ensure a high standard of quality in the final product

Research

Variance of vadose zone nitrogen concentrations in Nebraska based on climate zones, Lincoln, NE

Graduate Thesis, August 2024-Present

Linking Reactive Nitrogen Species within the Vadose Zone with Surface Irrigation, Lincoln, NE

Undergraduate Honors UCARE Thesis, Fall 2023-Spring 2024

Perception of Nature Based on Childhood Experiences, Lincoln, NE

Undergraduate Honors Environmental Studies Thesis, August 2023-May 2023

Involvement

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN), Lincoln, NE

Graduate Senator, April 2025-Present

- Represent graduate student interests in university-wide decisions through active participation in ASUN Senate meetings
- Collaborate with fellow senators, faculty, and administrators to advocate for policies that improve the graduate student experience
- Engage with constituents to gather feedback and ensure transparency in student government initiatives

Academics Committee Co-Chair, May 2025-Present

- Co-lead the Academics Committee in reviewing academic policies, proposing initiatives, and addressing student concerns related to curriculum, research, and instruction
- Facilitate meetings, coordinate with university offices, and help develop proposals aimed at enhancing academic support and resources for students
- Support academic equity and access by researching and promoting inclusive academic practices across departments

Out in Stem, Lincoln, NE

Member and Fundraising Coordinator, August 2022-September 2024

- Promote LGBT+ identities in STEM by creating a community with peers to advocate inclusion in the workplace
- Collaborate with other queer-identifying students by meeting biweekly to nurture innovation and leadership

CASNR Student Advisory Board, Lincoln, NE

Primary Programmer, August 2022-May 2024

- Collaborated with peers to discuss curriculum improvements, foster an inclusive community, and encourage open dialogue between students and faculty
- Communicated with leadership through teamwork to provide accurate information about events

Intelligence Community Scholars, Lincoln, NE

Member, May 2023-May 2024

- Actively engaged in extracurricular activities related to intelligence and national security, further demonstrating a dedication to personal and professional growth in the field
- Attended lectures, seminars, and workshops conducted by guest speakers in the field of intelligence, enhancing knowledge of the agencies

Peace Corps Prep, Lincoln, NE

Recruit, August 2023-May 2024

- Focus on the Environmental Sector and the region of Africa
- Acquired valuable intercultural communication skills, fostering effective collaboration with diverse teams and communities
- Established relationships with mentors and advisors, leveraging their guidance to shape personal and professional goals for a fulfilling Peace Corps experience
- Participated in rigorous Peace Corps Prep program, enhancing skills in cross-cultural understanding, language proficiency, and personal development

Sustainable Development Goals Scholars' Program, Lincoln, NE

Scholar, February 2022-May 2024

- Expanded knowledge of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by participating in expert sessions to promote a sustainable future
- Engaged with educational materials by utilizing an online course to gain a global perspective on the issue

Conferences

Student Research Days, Lincoln, NE

Presenter, April 2024

- Presented findings from my senior honors thesis, demonstrating expertise in vadose zone research to a diverse audience of peers, faculty, and industry experts
- Fielded questions and engaged in productive dialogue with attendees, showcasing the depth of knowledge and critical thinking applied in the research process
- Received positive feedback and recognition for the quality and relevance of the research presented

Meeting of the Minds Conference, St Louis, MO

Presenter, April 2024

- Delivered a compelling presentation on peer education, sharing innovative strategies and best practices for peer-led initiatives
- Participated in interactive workshops addressing a range of prevention topics, including sexual assault, relationship violence, suicide, and substance abuse, gaining valuable insights into holistic approaches to community wellness
- Networked with fellow presenters and attendees, exchanging ideas and forging connections with professionals and advocates committed to promoting mental health and well-being on college campuses and beyond

Spring Student Leadership Conference, Lincoln, NE

Presenter, January 2024

- Presented on inclusive leadership strategies, sharing insights and best practices for fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within campus leadership roles.
- Facilitated interactive discussions and activities to empower attendees with practical tools and techniques for promoting inclusivity and belonging in student organizations and initiatives.
- Received commendation for the impactful presentation, inspiring peers to cultivate inclusive environments and embrace diverse perspectives in their leadership endeavors.

2030 Solve Climate Event, Lincoln, NE

Student Panelist, April 2023

- Spoke on behalf of my involvements with food security and climate justice by communicating accomplishments and a call of action to Nebraskans across the state to raise awareness about intersections of climate change, social justice, and food security
- Demonstrated active listening skills and engaged with fellow presenters, gaining insights into their work related to climate action and social impact within the Lincoln area, fostering collaboration and understanding among peers for collective efforts toward sustainable solutions

Awards/Honors/Recognitions

Water Advanced Research and Innovation Fellowship, Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), January 2026

Honors Resilience Award, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, May 2024

Husker Volunteer Designation, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, May 2024

Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contributions to the LGBTQA+ Community, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, April 2024

Student Luminary Award, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, April 2024

Chevron Corporate Scholarship, oSTEM National, September 2023

University Honors Program, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, August 2022-May 2024

CASNR Changemaker Scholarship, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2022-May 2024

Ruth Leverton Scholarship, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2021-May 2024

CASNR Dean's List, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2023

Volunteer

Husker Pantry, Lincoln, NE, August 2022-May 2024

- Aided in destigmatizing food insecurity on campus by actively participating in the Husker Pantry initiative, which aims to provide accessible and judgment-free support to students in need
- Demonstrated a commitment to community service by dedicating time and effort to alleviate food insecurity
- Fulfilled pantry orders efficiently ensuring that students received the food and resources they required promptly

REACH Trainer, Lincoln, NE August 2022-May 2024

- Provided guidance and resources to individuals seeking further information on mental health and suicide prevention, emphasizing the importance of reducing mental health stigma
- Actively engaged in discussions to reduce mental health stigma, fostering an open and supportive environment that encourages dialogue around mental health challenges, and promotes understanding and empathy within the community

Certifications/Training

Allyship Training, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2023

First Aid/CPR/AED, American Red Cross, 2023-2025

Undocually Training, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2023

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Training, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2022-2025

Human Research Certification, Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, 2022-2025

Project WILD and Aquatic WILD, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2022

Project Wet

Memberships

oSTEM, August 2022

Soil and Water Conservation Society- Nebraska Chapter, February 2025

American Chemical Society, February 2025

Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environmental Education, February 2025