

Student Profile: Henry Clinger

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Henry Clinger helps his daughter ride a yak at a ZEW Club event.
Photo by Stephanie Scoville.

Henry Clinger is the School of Veterinary Medicine's 2024 class president, and after finishing his second year at Utah State University, he's headed to Pullman, Washington to finish his education in the WIMU Regional Program with Washington State University.

When he isn't studying or spending time with his family, Clinger enjoys rock climbing, paddleboarding, and hiking. He also has a passion for emergency medicine and working with local agriculture producers.

You've finished your first two years of your DVM. How's the journey been so far?

Henry Clinger: Veterinary school has been everything from stressful to more fun than I've ever had. Every time I learn something new, it feels fascinating and like I could make a career out of it, and then we move on to another topic that's equally engaging. Classmates, professors, and the veterinary community have really helped me enjoy the journey.

The first two years went by faster than any of the other four years I've been at USU. The pace is fast, and the time is flying.

What was the greatest challenge you faced at USU? How did you overcome it?

HC: I struggled with having less time to spend in a clinical setting. I went from a full-time job as a technician to spending hours in lectures, labs, and studying. It felt like I was disconnected from the career I loved even though I was learning and studying for it. It wasn't until I took a break from studies to assist Drs. Sweat and Scott with embryo transfer surgeries that I got a breath of clinical

fresh air. There are plenty of opportunities here at USU and with the local practitioners — I just had to get out and take them regularly.

You were married in 2017 and had a daughter in 2020. How do you balance being a spouse and parent with earning your doctorate?

HC: Balance for everyone is going to be different. I had an excellent support system: family, friends, and most importantly, my wife. Being a student, parent, and spouse is hard because everything I have time for is high priority. Everything wasn't always perfectly balanced. Sometimes studying wasn't as important as spending an evening with my family. Sometimes a date night turned into cramming for an exam and had to be postponed. It was important to know where I stood on material so I knew how much I could give to my family. I had to be satisfied with "good enough" scores when my family needed me.

If you could go back and give yourself one piece of advice at the start of the program, what would it be?

HC: Make the most of every opportunity. Take the chance to relax, study, socialize, work in a clinic, all of it. Opportunities for what you need will roll around. Be ready for them.

What are you most excited about at Washington State? And what will you miss most about Utah State?

HC: I'm excited to meet more of my colleagues at WSU. Everyone in veterinary medicine is a little nerdy, but we're all unique with our own stories to share.

I've been at Utah State for 6 years. Cache Valley is a second home for me, and the people both on and off campus have really made me welcome. I'm going to miss them.