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Acalanes alumna plans to spend summer studying animals in Madagascar

Submitted by Suzanne Roady



Morgan Orsolini at work with animals. Photo provided

Local resident and Acalanes High School alumna Morgan Orsolini is preparing for anything but an ordinary summer. Combining her passions for nature and animals, Orsolini has accepted a 10-week internship with SEED Madagascar (Sustainable Environment, Education and Development in Madagascar) based in Fort Dauphin, Madagascar. Starting in July, she will be living in "the bush" to work directly with the Malagasy people and local researchers.

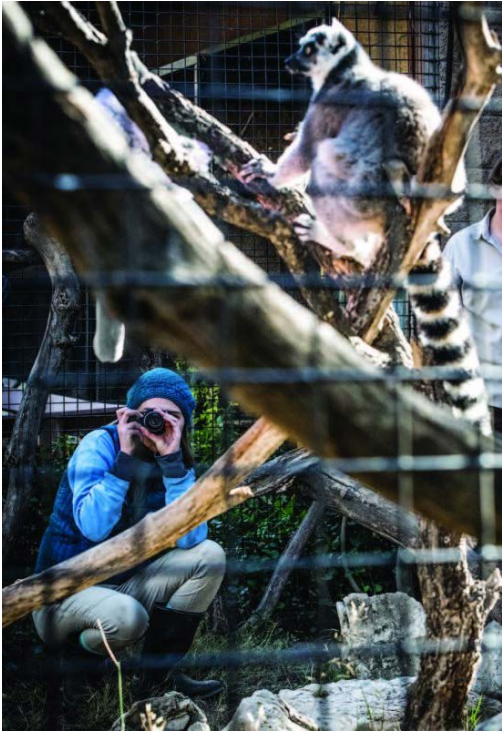
Orsolini has spent the last few years as an animal science major at Cal Poly SLO, and her main goal is to help captive breeding programs and understanding of reproduction so that she can help keep endangered animals from becoming extinct. She has been an intern at the Oakland Zoo and Charles Paddock Zoo assisting with animal care, animal training, public education and more in an effort to gain hands on experience in her chosen field. She also created educational videos for the

Charles Paddock Zoo. During this past summer, Orsolini conducted a research project as a part of her fellowship with the San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation Research to learn about how a rhinoceros diet affects reproduction. She has worked with lemurs and rhinoceroses along with many other animals at the zoos. She has also been involved in dog agility training since the age of 10, which has greatly helped her understanding of animal behavior.

This summer, Orsolini will be spending 10 weeks living in a tent in Madagascar in order to further her understanding of the wildlife and nature, lemur populations included, in the area. She will also be working with locals to help them establish a sustainable relationship with their environment. Hundreds of species, including the iconic lemur, are only native to Madagascar and they have lost about 80 percent of their original habitat. There are approximately 50 different kinds of lemur; over half of the populations are critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable. Orsolini hopes her work will help protect lemur species as well as the other plants and animals living on the island.

In order to support SEED Madagascar and all of the work being done in the Fort Dauphin community, Orsolini has started a fundraiser. All proceeds will be donated directly to SEED, of which 92 percent will be going straight to their on-site projects in Madagascar.

In order to support Orsolini's fundraiser for SEED Madagascar, please follow the following link to her GoFundMe page: <https://www.gofundme.com/seed-madagascar>. For more information: <https://madagascar.co.uk/>



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[back](#)

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