

# Member Spotlight



## DYLAN DOWEY



*I only entered one deer that year and received a third place ribbon in the professional division, but the knowledge I left with and the desire I had to improve my work was worth more than any ribbon I could have received.*

Hello, my name is Dylan Dowe, owner of Dowe's Taxidermy. I have been a part-time taxidermist for nine years now, but did not join the association until 2019. Growing up I always found myself looking at mounts anywhere I went that had them. I could always tell between quality mounts and mounts that did not look that great. This led to a desire of wanting to learn what all went into a quality mount, and boy did it turn out to be more than what I thought! With only needing three credits to graduate high school going into my senior year, I spent most my days in the school library and being a student aid for my ag teacher. After discussing with him my desire to go to school for taxidermy, and already in contact, and knowing what school I wanted to go to, The Pennsylvania Institute of Taxidermy, he approached the school board about letting me start school before graduation, and so it happened. In April I started taxidermy school Monday thru Thursday, and spent Fridays at my high school catching up on work.

After graduating taxidermy school with the basic understanding of taxidermy I started my own business in hopes of going full time. This ended up being a slow process for myself and I began to get bored with taxidermy and was slowly doing less and less. Then in the fall of 2019 I seen a jump in business and a new fire was lit. I decided to join the association and attend my first state taxidermy competition. This was a real eye opener for me to the world of competition taxidermy, and all the perks of belonging to an association. I only entered one deer that year and received a third place ribbon in the professional division, but the knowledge I

left with and the desire I had to improve my work was worth more than any ribbon I could have received. I decided at that point if I wasn't able to go full time with taxidermy I still wanted to learn how to produce an outstanding mount.

I have always had a love for fishing, and the challenge to produce a quality fish mount was where my interest was. After seeing Frank Kotula's tiger trout at the 2019 state competition, it inspired me to really take a look at my fish and improve them. I entered a skin mount rainbow trout at the Cabela's competition later that year and received a second place, and a reproduction brown trout at the state competition this year and received a second as well. I left each competition with more knowledge on how to improve my work, and got to meet some really nice people that I look forward to seeing at each competition.

Nothing is possible without God, and the support of family and friends. I owe a lot to my wife and son who deal with not seeing me very much from an already demanding full time job and a growing taxidermy business as well. My wife even let our first wedding anniversary be spent at Cabela's! Talk about love.

As everyone who is reading this probably already knows you cannot beat the connections and friendships you will make by joining the PTA. My only regret is that I didn't get involved nine years ago. Just makes me wonder what level my work would be at now! I hope everyone is being safe and healthy and by the time this gets published COVID-19 will be a thing of the past. Look forward to seeing everyone at the 2021 state competition.