

Kinesiology Bachelors Student Spotlight

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Undergraduate student Mackenzie Newman

My name is Mackenzie Newman and I am a junior here at USU studying Kinesiology with an emphasis of Exercise Science, as well as a minor in Psychology. I grew up in Herriman, Utah, graduating from Herriman High School in 2019. Exercising and being active has always been a very big part of me and my families lives. Growing up my parents had a rule that we always had to be involved in at least one sport. I tried lots of things but what stuck was swimming. I have been competitively swimming since I was 11 which is about 9 years. When I came up to USU, I joined the club team here and fell in love with it. I soon joined the presidency for the team to help run the team, but during my freshman year, the season was cut short due to covid, as was everyone else's. When I moved home for the rest of the school year and the proceeding summer, I was not able to swim since all the pool were closed to covid. I had nothing to do other than to use the sets of dumbbells and cable equipment that my parents had in our basement for exercise. I started to realize... "Hey, I actually really like this!"

I started to use different apps and YouTube videos to see what I liked and didn't like when it came to lifting. When I came back to USU in the fall I decided I wanted to be in a weight lifting class and I fell in love with lifting. I learned

how to squat, bench, and even deadlift better. Then later that spring I learned about the USU Powerlifting team and decided to give it a try since I love team environments! On my first day, I learned that what I thought I knew about lifting was actually very little. I started to learn a lot! As I fell in love with it, I began decided to sign up for a competition with the rest of the girls on the team for that upcoming October, about 6 months in advance.

This powerlifting meet was called The Battle of the Banshees. This meet was the first every only female powerlifting meet in Utah! I trained very hard for those 6 months, switching my focus from swimming to powerlifting. As soon as I had enough time to blink, my meet was already here. It was on October 2nd, 2021 at the Compound in West Valley. The environment was unlike anything I could have ever imagined! A gym full of strong women who like to lift as much weight as they can! The energy in the building was so unreal and empowering! At that meet improved my overall total by about 15 pounds with a total of about 632 pounds! My squat was 220.5 lbs, my bench 115, and my deadlift at 297.5 pounds. This total is insane to think of for me because, just in January of 2021 when I started lifting with the powerlifting team, my total was only 430 pounds (squat 145, bench 100, deadlift 185).

Swimming is also back stronger than ever for the USU Swim team with the biggest team in years! We went and competed in a swim meet against CSU and 5 other universities over fall break and have 2 more meets coming up in November! I help run the team as the Vice President of the club! I also teach 2 of the lap swim classes for the university and I love it! My love for nutrition and exercise only continues to grow from learning how to lift, continuing to swim, as well as taking my classes in my program! I start to realize I am in the right field of study whenever I apply what I am learning in my classes into my everyday life and I am LOVING IT!