



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Alums Muter a Finalist for 'Wanna Be Like Jack Hanna' Contest**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding the naming of Ferris State University alumnus Bret Muter as a finalist for the "Wanna Be Like Jack Hanna" contest. Further information is available by contacting Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services. A photo of Bret is attached (below).

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**Ferris Alumnus Muter Named Finalist for 'Wanna Be Like Jack Hanna' Contest**

BIG RAPIDS – Bret Muter is doing more than simply saying he wants to be like Jack Hanna. He is proving his desire by letting his actions speak louder than his words.

Muter, a 2006 graduate of Ferris State University's College of Arts and Sciences with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Biology, recently was named one of five finalists in the "Wanna Be Like Jack Hanna" contest. The grand prize winner gets a six-week trip to South Africa to attend the Mantis Field Guide Academy at the Shamwari Game Reserve and an appearance on the Emmy-winning nationally syndicated series "Jack Hanna's Into the Wild." The series is filmed at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in Ohio where Hanna continues to serve as director emeritus.

The second-place prize is a trip to New York City to watch Hanna and animal handlers work behind the scenes during one of his in-studio TV interviews. The third-place prize is a trip to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for a three-day VIP tour and shadowing experience.

Muter submitted his entry via video, which can be [viewed here](#), as an explanation for why he wanted to be like Hanna, a leading national expert on animals.

"I am honored and excited to be one of the five finalists in the 'Wanna Be Like Jack Hanna' contest," said Muter, a Saginaw native, who currently is working on his Ph.D through the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University. "I grew up watching Jack's 'Animal Adventures' program on Saturday mornings and have looked up to him since."

At Ferris, Muter worked in the Card Wildlife Education Center and founded the FSU Outdoor Club which brought Hanna to campus in 2005 and 2006 as part of the club's "Outdoors Brought Indoors Week."

Now, Muter is a finalist in Hanna's contest along with Craig Estep, of Matthews, N.C.; Rebecca Long, of Worthington, Ohio; Cassandra Stull, of Delaware, Ohio; and Elizabeth Tapanes, of Miami, Fla. Muter earned his spot in the final five with a video that caught the attention of Hanna, who commented, "He shows amazing dedication to the animal world. Bret has worked hard to educate the public about the importance of conservation and the need to protect animals for future generations."

That passion for animals goes back to childhood for Muter.

"I have always been fascinated with animals. Growing up as an only child in a rural area, every day was an adventure as I explored the fields, forests and ditches near my home," said Muter, who earned a Master of Science degree from MSU in 2009. "In hindsight, it's not surprising that my childhood interest has shaped my career path and my desire to travel the world."

Voting for this final phase of the contest started on Nov. 23 and runs through Dec. 9. People can vote once per day per e-mail address. To vote, and to view all of the video entries, visit <http://www.columbuszoo.org/contest/vote.aspx>



MUTERGOOD.jpg

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