

## *Greater impact upon our future generations*

### **Barry Walton**

**College of Arts & Sciences  
MS, Oceanography**

#### [College of Arts & Sciences Student Spotlight](#)

Barry is a [2019 Guy Harvey Scholarship](#) recipient. This is a highly competitive award in his field.

#### **Florida State University as the Number ONE choice to pursue a graduate degree**

After finishing my undergraduate degree, I knew that I had the capability of succeeding at the next level! I chose FSU so that I could work with some of the best researchers in my field. I drove down from Mississippi to interview here with Dr. Cotton and knew that FSU was where I belonged. As a Marine, I learned to never cease in trying to reach my full potential. I have that same mindset towards my academic career.

#### **Importance and/or impact of research and work**

My research helps us better understand the ecological role, reproductive biology, and abundance of local fish species. My work is breaking new ground to learn more about the creatures of the sea. This empowers future conservation efforts with the data needed to make more informed management decisions benefitting future generations.

#### **Career aspirations**

I plan to remain in the field of marine biology/biological oceanography and continue research on elasmobranchs (sharks and rays). I plan to study their stress physiology and how it is affected by anthropogenic factors. Changes in stress levels can significantly influence the reproduction and growth of these animals so, by understanding that interaction, hopefully, we can mitigate future impact, which is crucial to protecting these species. I would love to work at the FSU Coastal and Marine Lab.

#### **Advice for anyone considering graduate school**

My advice is to pursue a research topic that you are passionate about and that deeply interest you. Graduate school is very demanding and your research becomes your life. If you are not overwhelmed with excitement and you don't "geek out" regularly about your research then your graduate school experience will not be as fulfilling or enjoyable as it could be!

