



Welcome, and thank you for considering the Advanced Taxidermy Training Center of NW Montana.

Here at ATTC, we take your training seriously. Our number one goal is to provide you with the tools needed to run your own successful taxidermy shop.

The techniques we teach allow you to guarantee your taxidermy work for life. We also teach you novel and enjoyable ways to attract customers.

Whether you want a lucrative, full time career in taxidermy, or just a great way to make extra money in today's economy, ATTC is a great choice! After you graduate, we always remain available help resolve any issues you run into.

Please browse our printable catalog, and be sure to contact us with any questions!

**Contact Info:**

Office: (406)827-5180 Cell: (406)531-3451 *(no texting)*

**Mailing Address:**

ATTC 10 Saleesh Dr. Thompson Falls, Mt. 59873

**Table of Contents**

Welcome	Pg 1
About Us	Pg 2
Our Facility	Pg 2
Taxidermy as a Career	Pg 3-4
Class Schedule	Pg 4
Course Descriptions	Pg 5-6
Tuition	Pg 7
Housing	Pg 7
Location/Map	Pg 8
Policies	Pg 9 - 11
Graduate Testimonials	Pg 12-13

## About Us

The staff at ATTC consists of myself, (Steve Fundum), and my wife, Ro Fundum.

We have been practicing commercial as well as competition level taxidermy since the early 1980's, and have seen many advancements in the profession. The first class we taught was in 1987, and we were hooked! Since then we have developed & perfected many of our own taxidermy trade secrets. We regularly attend seminars in order to examine the techniques of the top taxidermy experts in the world. We are constantly improving upon our teaching methods to reflect the ever improving taxidermy techniques available. To learn competition level taxidermy, it is important to learn from an award winning taxidermist. Steve has won awards as the state, regional, and national levels, as well as the coveted Wasco Award.



In 1994 we expanded our interests to include wildlife sculpting, and have successfully marketed a collection of bronzed wildlife art. Our experience in sculpting has added fresh quality to our taxidermy skills, by further increasing our awareness of anatomical accuracy. We feel fortunate to have earned many top awards with our taxidermy work. It is fulfilling to have discovered such a successful and creative outlet for our love of wildlife.

## Facility

Our facility is conveniently located on our residential property, just a stone's throw away from our home.

The working area of our shop consists of:

- 1400 s.f. of classroom area on the main floor, plus a 480 s.f. painting/finishing/drying area
- A showroom, a salting/freezer room, and storage/drying rooms
- There is approximately 240 s.f. of additional storage upstairs, but everything pertaining to student training is conveniently located on the main floor
- Each student has a minimum of 5 ft of table space, as well as ample floor space

We are equipped with all the modern tools & equipment necessary to run an efficient taxidermy studio. In addition, you will receive your own set of personal tools to keep. The tools in your kit are the types of tools you will use often enough that you need your own set, as sharing would be a hindrance. The tools are included in your tuition.



## Taxidermy as a Career

We are often asked, “How much money can I make as a taxidermist?”

*Short Answer:* If you are lazy, (and we’re being honest here)...you won’t make a lot of money, no matter where you live or what the economy is like. If however, you live in an area with good hunting or fishing, and if you are self motivated, taxidermy can be extremely lucrative!

*Long Answer:* In ideal conditions, a motivated taxidermist can possibly earn up to \$10,000 per month during their busy months, and average over \$5000 per month over a 12 month period. Taxidermists earn a living through a wide variety of projects, including shoulder mounts (gameheads), rugs, lifesize mounts, birds, fish, antler plaques, European mounts, etc. Most taxidermy businesses make the bulk of their income through gameheads, so that will be used as our example. Taxidermists vary in what they charge for gameheads, depending on local economy and of course, quality of the taxidermists’ work.

A taxidermist who takes a lot of shortcuts will most likely be at the lower end of the price scale. Their mounts do NOT look good as they age. Ears shrink & curl, lips separate, noses shrivel, the hide pulls away from the form, and one year can make a poorly mounted deer look ancient. These types of taxidermists will have a tough time making money in taxidermy.

On the other side of the coin are taxidermists who spend a little more time and a few more dollars on each shoulder mount, resulting in a product that will stand the test of time.

And a select few taxidermists (us included), will guarantee their work for life. Of course, the techniques you learn in class will also allow you to guarantee your taxidermy work for life.

So depending some of the above factors, average customer prices for a deer/antelope size shoulder mount range anywhere from around \$495, to \$700 each. Let’s head towards the lower end of the scale and say you only charge around \$525.00 for each deer. Your own costs will average around \$75 for the mannikin, \$25 for eyes/ears, \$45 for tanning, and about \$20 for other supplies such as hide paste, T-pins, mache, etc. This totals a cost of \$165 per deer, which leaves a net profit (before overhead) of \$360 per deer.

### *Yearly Totals:*

Once you have a year or two under your belt, it is pretty easy to bring in at least 75 deer per year, although those numbers can also happen sooner. That is a very low estimate, as many established taxidermy businesses bring in hundreds of deer per season. But in keeping with our estimate of 75 deer gameheads per year, you are looking at a NET profit of \$27,000 just for deer alone.

And remember, you will also have birds, fish, fox, coyote, raccoon, lions, elk, moose, and many other species too numerous to list. You can expect to make at least the same (and likely higher) profit margin on the other species you will be mounting. Your own costs for mounting birds and fish for example, are significantly lower than gameheads, and this results in an even higher profit margin.

### *Monthly Earnings:*

Getting back to the deer though, let's talk about your time expended and profit per hour. Although each gamehead will go through a variety of stages in the mounting process, the combined time involved is usually about 1 full day per shoulder mount. This means that for each deer mounted you are looking at a profit of \$360 per day, or \$45 per hour. At \$45 per hour, a motivated taxidermist who takes just a little time to market themselves properly can make over \$10,000 during the busiest mounting months in pre-overhead net profit. And remember, fish and birds can bring in even more in terms of hourly earnings! Of course the overhead needs to be taken into consideration. You will have expenses for utilities, office supplies, insurance, and advertising, etc. If you pay rent or a mortgage for your shop building, that monthly payment must be factored in as well. Those expenses are easy to total up and subtract from the monthly earnings given above. As you can see, your profits are still quite lucrative!

When making your decision on whether or not our school is right for you, remember this; At ATTC we guarantee our customer work for life, and we teach you to do the same. We teach you enjoyable ways to market yourself. Our marketing strategies work for everyone, even non-assertive types! Learning taxidermy in six weeks is well worth the time and tuition when you consider the long term payoff. Compared to a conventional college education that may or may not get you a good paying job, attending a taxidermy school simply makes sense for anyone who loves hunting, fishing, and wildlife! Finally, we encourage you to call us any time with any questions you have about taxidermy as a career.

### **Class Schedule**

Our Six Week Full Taxidermy Course is offered 3 times per year. For those of you who wish to specialize, or have time restrictions, we also offer a 2 week Gamehead Specialty Course. This course is generally offered once each summer, and is scheduled based on interest.

Please call before sending in your deposit and enrollment application, to make sure there are openings in the class you wish to attend. When you send in your deposit, we will put a temporary hold on your spot for you. The hold becomes permanent when we receive your enrollment.

Class hours are weekdays from 8:00-5:00, with 30 minute lunch breaks. You will have 40 - 45 clock hours per week, with a minimum of 240 total clock hours for the Six Week Course, and minimum of 90 total clock hours for each of the Two Week Courses.

#### ***2019 Class Dates***

Complete Course; 6 week Winter  
1/21/19 – 3/1/19

Complete Course; 6 week Spring  
3/25/19 – 5/3/19

Complete Course; 6 week Summer  
6/3/19 – 7/12/19

Specialty Class 2019  
dates to be announced.....

## Course Descriptions

**Six Week Full Course:** This is a complete, well rounded class for those who wish to learn all the skills of a successful commercial taxidermist. This course includes all of the individual specialties in taxidermy (gameheads, lifesize, rugs, birds, & fish). In addition, a wide variety of habitat techniques and other topics are taught throughout the course, as outlined below.

### *Full Course Requirements:*



Two competition level gameheads (deer/antelope sizes), one lifesize mammal (our choice of fox, raccoon, fisher, mink, etc.), one open mouth rug (fox, coyote, raccoon, etc.), one rooster pheasant, one drake mallard, one cold water fish, one warm water fish, and one fiberglass reproduction

You will also complete a variety of beautiful habitat bases for many of your class projects. Your completed showroom mounts, as well as your habitat bases and tools, are all yours to keep when you leave.

### **Business Set-Up and Client Interaction** (8 Clock Hours):

Over the years we have created various forms that make the record keeping end of our business much simpler. Our forms are very user-friendly, and do not take a lot of training, so don't worry about spending a lot of class time learning paperwork!

We also discuss simple marketing methods, taxidermy suppliers, and state & federal taxidermy licensing. In order to reserve as much time as possible for your actual taxidermy training, the time you spend in this part of the course will be short but efficient. You will be amazed at the effectiveness of this small but valuable part of the course.

**Taxidermy Techniques** (215 Clock Hours): Topics covered here are so numerous, that we will just list the pertinent ones. We start with hide prepping (thinning, cartilage removal, etc) then move on to measuring, and mannikin preparation. The actual mounting process covers many procedures. We start with test fitting and form preparation. Then we cover many steps involved with setting eyes & ears. We teach our own award winning nasal septum procedure. And finally, you learn proper stitching, as well as additional procedures too numerous to list.

For birds, we cover the difference between skinning for flying vs standing, as well as cleaning, tumbling, tanning, the use of artificial heads, and additional mounting procedures too numerous to list.

For fish, we cover skinning, washing, tanning, mannikin carving, use of real vs. artificial heads, and lots of training on painting! We also include fiberglass reproduction training.

For all mounts, finish work is covered in detail. For every mount, airbrush painting is part of that finish work. All along the way you will have access to official taxidermy competition score sheets to make sure you stay on top of each and every

item as you go. We include all of our advanced techniques, and cover the differences between commercial and competition procedures.

**Habitat (15 clock hours):** We take great pride in our habitat training. Our advanced habitat training, goes above & beyond the simple rocks/plants/moss materials, that are so common nowadays. Have you ever seen what was supposed to be a rock, and wondered why it didn't look real? Have you seen rocks, snow, or icicles you thought were real, only to find out they were artificial?

Realistic habitats are easy when learned correctly, so we cover the simple basics and then go a few steps further by including advanced techniques, as well as a variety of original techniques we have developed.

**Tanning (2 clock hours):** Students will not tan individual mammals due to time restrictions. We cover the basics of in-house tanning projects, and how they compare to commercial tanning. Tanning methods for preserving birds and fish, are different from those used for mammals. You will be tanning your own birds and fish before the actual mounting process begins.

### **Gamehead Specialty Course (two weeks):**

Gamehead taxidermy is the 'bread and butter' of any taxidermy business, so this is a great option for those of you who want to get into taxidermy but have time restrictions, or for those who simply want to concentrate on gamehead taxidermy. Gameheads alone can provide you with a profitable part time or even full time career, depending upon local hunting

opportunities, and of course, your own personal motivation. A great benefit to this course, is the fact that you will be doing one of your gameheads (generally a bear) with an open mouth. This will give you the skills needed to mount open mouth rugs as well!

#### *Gamehead Course Requirements:*

One Deer or Antelope shoulder mount, and one Open Mouth Bear mount. After completing this course you will have the knowledge and skills to open your own taxidermy business, specializing in gameheads and rugs.



As with our complete six week course, the tuition for the Specialty Gamehead Course includes everything needed to complete your mounts. You will not be paying extra for specimens, forms, etc. Your only extra costs will be for travel and living expenses.

#### **Business Set-Up and Client Interaction (8 Clock**

**Hours):** This part of the course covers exactly the same information that is covered in our Six Week Complete Course.

**Taxidermy Techniques (82 Clock Hours):** All techniques and procedures taught will be the same standards as in the gamehead portion of our Six Week Complete Course. There are no shortcuts taken with this course. Thorough prepping, fitting, sewing, mounting, and finish work is covered in detail. And as stated above, airbrush painting is part of the finish work for every mount.

## Tuition

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<b>Tuition, Full Six-Week Course</b>	<b>\$6,295.00</b> Minus
Enrollment Fee, <i>due with application:</i>	<b>\$895.00</b> Equals
Tuition Balance, <i>due on 1st day of class:</i>	<b>\$5,400.00</b>

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<b>Tuition. Gamehead Specialty Course (2 wk)</b>	<b>\$3,295.00</b>
Minus Enrollment Fee, <i>due with application:</i>	<b>\$700.00</b>
<i>Equals Tuition Balance, due on 1st day of class:</i>	<b>\$2,595.00</b>

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Your taxidermy school tuition here at ATTC, includes all Specimens and Supplies needed to complete your training! You also receive a fully stocked tool box, a custom notebook filled with helpful educational handouts, and a variety of supplier catalogs. These things are all yours to keep when you leave.

You will head home with a great set of taxidermy mounts for your new showroom! While you are here, your only extra expense will be for food, travel, and housing.

If you add up what it would cost to have all of your class projects mounted by your local taxidermist, factor in the cost of the hides and skins, then add the fact that you're getting a great education on top of it, you'll see that our tuition price is extremely reasonable!

## Housing

**Note:** Most motels listed below have kitchenette rooms, some also have camping available.

### **Trout Creek Motel (406)827-3268**

*Location:* Trout Creek, Mt., 20-25 min. from school

*Rates:* \$190- \$230/wk.

### **Falls Motel (800)521-2184**

*Location:* Thompson Falls, Mt., 15 min. from school

*Rates:* Call for rates

### **Rimrock Lodge & RV Park (406)827-3536**

*Location:* West end of Thompson Falls, 10 min. from school

*Rates:* Ask for Student Rates!!!

### **Riverfront Motel & RV Park (406)827-3460**

*Location:* West end of Thompson Falls, 10 min. from school

*Rates:* Ask for Student Rates in Winter & Spring

### **Birdland Bay RV Resort (406)827-4757**

*Location:* West end of Thompson Falls, 10 min. from school

*Rates:* Call

### **Log Cabin Rental (406)827-4645**

*Location:* Less than 1 mi from school! *Rates:* Call Greg

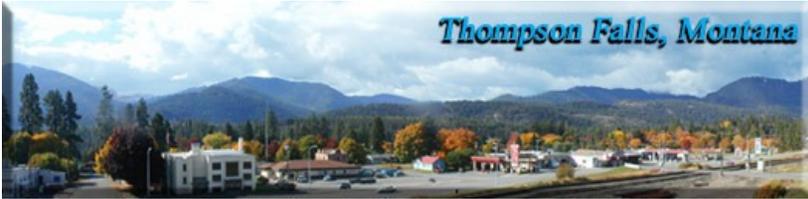
### **Furnished Apartments (406)370-4393**

*Location:* Various *Rates:* Call Gail

### **Efficiency Apartment (352)228-0291**

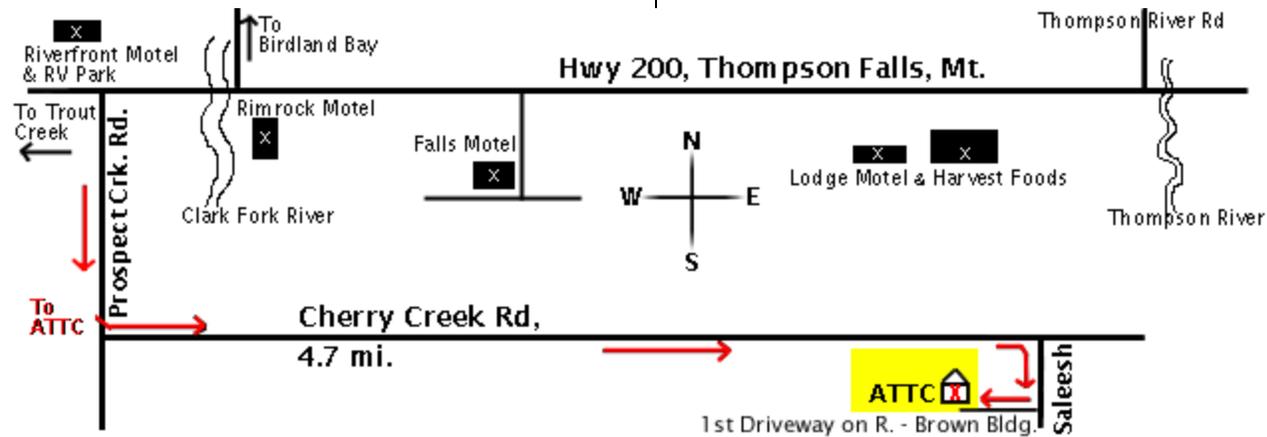
*Location:* Five minutes from school. *Rates:* Call Bob

## Location & Map



The Advanced Taxidermy Training Center of NW Montana is situated in the quaint community of Thompson Falls. We look forward to sharing our undiscovered paradise, located approximately 95 miles NW of Missoula, Montana, and about 65 miles east of Sandpoint, Idaho.

If you love the outdoors, spectacular scenery, and an abundance of nature & wildlife, then Thompson Falls is a dream come true! Please visit our website for area photos and a list of things to do in your off time.



## **Policies**

### ***Enrollment***

You may enroll as long as there are openings in the class of your choice. To insure housing availability however, we recommend enrolling early.

You do not need experience to attend our course. The requirements for acceptance are:

- You must be at least 18 years of age.\*
- You must be able to read and write English.
- Each student needs to have 'phone/voice' contact with us prior to acceptance within our program.

\*If you are close to your 18th birthday, you may attend with a parent or guardian's signed permission statement.

*ATTC does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, handicap, sex, or age.*

### ***Attendance***

*Regular Attendance is Vital!* Even one missed day can throw you way behind. Two or more missed days can put you too far behind to catch up with the rest of the class.

In the event you miss too many days to catch up, we may advise that you finish your training at the next session with available opening. An available opening, is defined as an opening that is still available just two weeks prior to the start of that particular class.

The reason for this policy, is that our goal is to fill each class with full paying students, not students who have already paid for a previous class. If you need to discontinue our course without making plans to finish, our regular refund policy will apply.

In over 30 years of teaching however, only two students have ever found it necessary to discontinue their training.

### ***Tardiness***

We begin class promptly at 8:00 each morning, and you are expected to arrive on time so that you do not hold up the rest of the class. Tardiness is acceptable only in emergency situations, and we will deal with tardiness on an individual basis. Chronic tardiness without good reason may be cause for dismissal.

Things like car accidents, heart attacks, and being held at gunpoint are good reasons. (Okay, a flat tire is allowable too.) Sleeping in and hangovers are not good reasons.

We would like to point out that once you start class, you will enjoy it so much that every morning you will be eager to begin and tardiness will not be an issue for you!

### ***Conduct***

We simply ask that you conduct yourselves with an attitude of mutual respect, and try to curb tendencies of excessive foul language. That being said, we have always been very fortunate regarding student conduct. In the unlikely event that we find conduct to be an issue, we would apply the guidelines set forth in the 'Probation' paragraph.

## ***Grading***

We do not have tests, or use a standard grading system. With our Pass/Fail method, we maintain a “do it till it’s right” philosophy, and are there with you every step of the way. When you arrive, you are given an official NTA taxidermy score sheet. This is used as a reference throughout the course to make sure you are completing everything according to our standards. Using this method, we have never had a student complete anything sub-standard, or even close to the “Fail” category. The huge majority of our students produce work that is excellent! When you complete the course with a “pass” rating, you will receive a Certificate of Completion.

All that being said, regulations require that we have policies in place for our Pass/Fail system. So...if a student fails, they may come back at our discretion, to another class to repeat the failed portion of the course. The repeated part of the course must be in a class that is not already filled to capacity with paying students. A pro-rated daily amount will be charged, based upon the number of days needed to complete the make-up training. There may also be charges for any additional supplies needed for the make-up training.

***Probation:*** If we feel your training is in jeopardy due to any reason, we will issue warnings and/or probations/dismissals depending upon the nature of the infraction. There is no official probation period, as some infractions can impede your training or disrupt class more than others. For example, if you are late two days in a row, that is not as damaging as if you were to lose your temper, throw all your work out in the parking area, and repeatedly run over them with your car. That has never happened of course, but regulations require that we be rather

thorough with our intent here. So, whereas being tardy two days in a row may prompt a verbal warning, running over your mounts with your car would likely be grounds for immediate dismissal.

***Re-Entrance:*** In the unlikely event we do dismiss a student for unsatisfactory progress, we will consider re-admittance on an individual basis. Re-entrance may involve additional charges depending upon supplies needed and number of days attended.

## ***Credit for Previous Training***

Credit for Previous Training will be given at our discretion. To assess your previous training, we need to evaluate 2-3 projects that you completed yourself, in the category you want credit for (gameheads, birds, etc.). You must present the projects ahead of time, and explain techniques for each of your mounts. Upon evaluation, we will grant credit where appropriate.

*Most* students who come to our school with previous training or experience, have minimal skills and still need to complete all of the required projects. Most experienced students decide to replace many of their previous techniques with the efficient procedures we teach in our course.

## ***Deposit Refunds***

As stated on our tuition page, all deposits are nonrefundable. When a student does have to cancel, the following scenario is common;

The student calls us and gives his/her reason for canceling. Every student who cancels is always under the impression that

their reason is valid enough to warrant a refund. Simply put, it would not be fair to refund some deposits, but not others. This is why there are *no exceptions* to our “no refund” policy. This may sound harsh, but please understand that when you enroll we reserve a spot for you. No one else can take that spot. We order specimens and supplies based on upcoming enrollments. And finally, if deposits were simply refunded every time a student had to cancel, that would contradict the very reason for the deposit.

We realize emergencies do arise however, so here is our compromise; If you have to cancel, we will apply your deposit towards another class (within one year of the original booking) *if* the following conditions are met:

- We are able to fill your class with at least six students.
- You send in an additional deposit equal to the original deposit amount.

*Both* deposit amounts are then credited towards the tuition of the rescheduled class. In the past, we have had students who just kept canceling, then reapplying the same original deposit to the next class. We have implemented the “additional deposit” policy to prevent this. It is required each time a student switches classes. It is in your best interest to let us know as soon as possible if you have to cancel. This will allow us more time to fill the class, which will satisfy requirement #1 above. In order to reduce class vacancies, there are no exceptions to the above rules.

Bottom line, please be sure of your plans to attend our taxidermy school before you send in your deposit!

### ***Tuition Refunds*** (VA Beneficiaries, please see VA Refund Policy.)

If a student is unable to complete a class, the tuition refund will be pro-rated according to the date of cancellation, minus the deposit amount, and the amount of supplies used. The date of cancellation will be the day ATTC receives written notice that the student can no longer attend the course. No refund will be issued to students who complete at least 6 days (20%) of the class.

### ***VA Refund Policy***

For VA beneficiaries on the GI Bill®, the following refund policy complies with current VA Policy, 38 CFR 21.4255:

**(1) Pro-Rated Tuition:** The school may charge a sum which does not vary more than 10 percent from the exact pro rata portion of such tuition, fees, and other charges that the length of the completed portion of the course bears to its total length. The exact proration will be determined on the ratio of the number of days of instruction completed by the student to the total number of instructional days in the course. Refunds will be calculated by determining the exact pro-rated amount of the course duration, minus 10%, minus the exact amount needed to pay for specimens, tools, mannikins, and other supplies used.

**(2) Breakage Fee:** In the event the VA beneficiary student withdraws or cancels before the first day of class, an \$895 breakage fee will apply. If the student arrives for class and attends for at least one full day before withdrawing, then the numbers (1) & (2) above will apply, and there will be no breakage fee.

## Graduate Testimonials

Hi Steve, Ro & Norman

*I had a good trip home. My family is totally impressed with the mounts I did. They have a lot of projects they want me to do. I looked at all the old mounts I have and they are just commercial mounts they don't have all the detail that you taught me. I'm also set up with Sue for tanning and rug making. A big thank you Steve, your instruction will help me have a successful business... Thanks, Kathi Henson*



Hi Steve and Roe.

*This is Eric Kallis in Kalispell. Just giving you guys a update on my progress. I have completed my life size sheep mount and it turned out excellent! Just finished up two wolf mounts for the Tribe in Ronan. I have had an*

*excellent year for new clients and appreciate all you guys taught me. The quality of work is starting to pay off. All my customers have been very happy. I am doing some mounts that I didn't think I was going to get a chance to do this early in my career. Thanks for all you both have done for me and my business!*

*Eric*

Good morning Steve & Ro,,

*I was just thinking about you guys as I walked into my shop this morning, I can't begin to tell what a great feeling it is to walk into my own taxidermy shop and see my display hanging on the wall. I just want to thank you guys for the great experience.... I finally got my shop all done and already have started working on mounts..... I am excited to see what this summer and next hunting season brings me. I plan on visiting good old Thompson Falls this summer so when I do I will stop by and say "hello". Thanks for all your support and patience that you had with us, God bless!*

*Sincerely,  
Brad Wirgau  
Tall Tales Taxidermy  
Paris, TN 38242*

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*Additional Email received from Brad a few months later.....*

*Well Steve it looks like your school paid off. Went to my first competition show (TTA) in Chapel Hill, TN and did really well. I was SHOCKED when I walked into the show area and saw all five of my entries with a ribbon on them. Just wanted to keep you guys updated; Tall Tales Taxidermy has a Great career ahead due to your school. Thanks again for the hard work and putting up with me.....*

*Brad Wirgau*



Steve & Ro,

*This is the Raccoon I mounted at school.... I learned so much in class, it was awesome. Can't wait for my shop to be going full time. Probably will happen sometime next year.*

*Thanks Again, Jared Delaite*



This raccoon mount was completed in class by ATTC student, **Jared DeLaite**. After graduation, he took it to the Maine Taxidermy Show & Competition. It took first place, as well as 'Best Lifesize', 'Best of Show' and numerous other awards. This was just one of Jared's successes, as he won a few awards on other pieces as well.

It has been a several years now since Jared graduated, and he is still running a very successful taxidermy business. You can find Delaite's Taxidermy in South Woodville, Maine, on Facebook.

Hi Steve and Ro,

*Over this past weekend we had our Idaho Taxidermy Assn Convention, there were over 100 mounts at the show and just wanted to pass on the good news to you guys. My results were;*

**2 blue ribbons (one for a whitetail and one for my lifesize mink)  
4 red ribbons (pheasant, bass, mallard drake, and whitetail)**

*In addition to those, at the banquet I was awarded the "McKenzie Taxidermy Supply Taxidermist's Choice Best Whitetail Award Idaho 2011".... What a huge honor for my first show!!!! I went in not expecting anything and came away with alot more than I ever imagined.*

*Just wanted to say thanks again and I couldn't have done it without the training I received and the importance of focusing on detail!!!!*

*Thanks again, Chris Campbell  
In Your Sights Taxidermy*

Chris graduated several years ago, and still enjoys running his taxidermy business. You can find him on Facebook, at [Facebook.com/In.Your.Sight.Taxidermy](https://www.facebook.com/In.Your.Sight.Taxidermy)

