

# LINDSEY (Hasenour) SICKBERT

## Studying Chimpanzees or Teaching: Lindsey's Changing Career Path

Graduate: Class of 2003      Occupation: Special Education Teacher  
By Krista Recker, Spring 2010

Never boring and always unpredictable: this simply explains a typical day with Lindsey (Hasenour) Sickbert at her career. As a special education teacher, Lindsey teaches small groups of children reading, writing, phonics, math, life and social skills, and incorporates speech, physical, and occupational therapy tasks. From eating to using the restroom, Lindsey also aids her students while teaching basic life skills. Working on a one-on-one basis with her students allows Lindsey to evaluate their progress or needs. "Our mission is to provide a positive learning environment that promotes success in the home, school, and community," says Lindsey. With her job comes stressful amounts of paperwork and documentation, which she devotes time for every day.

Lindsey did not always want to become a teacher; in her early elementary school days, Lindsey admired Jane Goodall who studied chimpanzees in Africa. Just years later, after reading *Our Brother Has Down's Syndrome*, she realized what she wanted to become: a special education teacher. Lindsey took the following classes during high school: child development, family development, sociology, and psychology. These classes with the interning she did at Ferdinand Elementary School helped Lindsey start her journey toward a special education career. Furthermore, becoming a camp counselor, substituting, tutoring, and volunteering her time to work with children helped Lindsey to learn and develop into a successful person. According to Lindsey, ". . . no book will be able to prepare you for certain situations. Experience is probably the best teacher of all."

A college graduate from University of Southern Indiana, Lindsey majored in elementary education, while acquiring a minor in special education. She currently works to pursue her master's degree, focusing on the content area of reading.

As most say, special education is not for everyone; it takes a special person to have the patience and passion to teach those more challenged than others. When she started her first full-time job three years ago at Holland Elementary School, Lindsey proved this statement true.

Lindsey's first shocking experience occurred when a usually non-verbal, autistic student of hers stopped reviewing his flashcards, When she asked him what the next flashcard said, he stared straight into her eyes and replied, "Sickbert." To hear the young, non-verbal child speak brought her to tears. As a result of experiences like these, Lindsey knows why she has chosen her career path. The sense of fulfillment she feels when her hard work pays off makes the job worthwhile for her. When a child struggles to understand, she puts additional effort into her job knowing the outcome, a shining smile of a child who has achieved their ambition.