Sara Sillik is a Tucson native and a first-generation college student. She is currently an honors undergraduate physiology major with a minor in geography. Sara is an Undergraduate Biology Research Program scholar, National Society of Collegiate Scholar, and a member of Campus Crusades Bible study group (CRU). She has been working in Dr. Brian McKay’s lab for a year and a half now. Sara believes the primary goal of her time in the McKay lab is to contribute to curing the two leading causes of blindness in the world, age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and glaucoma. The immediate goal of her project is to determine the relationship between two families of receptors, L-DOPA and dopamine, and how this interaction contributes to AMD pathology. She sees the McKay lab as a unified team that works together every day to further the knowledge of these two diseases and to improve the lives of millions of people that have these particular diseases. Participation on this team is extremely rewarding and essential. Sara’s overall goal is to make a difference in the fields of AMD and glaucoma as a researcher in her undergraduate years. She plans on furthering her education by attending optometry school in the year of 2020. When Sara is not in the lab she enjoys hiking, running, and watching basketball.

Interview with KXCI for Thesis Thursday:

<https://kxci.org/podcast/thesis-thursday-sara-sillik/>