



**Calle Shwani**

**Bachelor's Degree Title & Year (Ex. Chemistry, B.S., 2026)**

Science General, B.S., 2026

**Master's Degree Title & Year/Expected Graduation (Ex. Chemistry, M.S., 2026)**

Administration and Supervision, M.Ed., 2027

### **Why MTSU?**

MTSU was the last school I wanted to attend.

In high school, I applied to a few universities that I thought were the “perfect picks.” I wanted the full college experience: living independently, figuring life out on my own, experiencing new things, and becoming an adult. However, as graduation got closer, I started to feel uneasy about leaving my friends and family and moving so far away.

I mentioned my doubts to my counselor, Ms. Horton, who had attended MTSU herself. She told me, “MTSU is still accepting students. They have an amazing agriculture program that you would enjoy.” I decided to take her advice and toured the school with my mom.

At first, I remember not feeling particularly connected to MTSU. Then, at the very end of the tour, someone mentioned the MTSU dairy farm. My mom and I were thrilled and immediately drove over to see it. The moment I saw the cows and experienced the farm, something clicked. I fell in

love with it and knew this was where I belonged.

When I got home that evening, I applied to MTSU.

After my first year, I applied to work at the dairy farm. What started as a student job turned into one of the most meaningful parts of my college experience. I have now worked at the MTSU dairy for about four years, and along the way, I have been given opportunities I never could have imagined.

As a student worker, I became the calf barn manager and served as president of the Dairy Science Club. I was featured as a speaker on "Out of the Blue", had my farming experiences published in a Tennessee magazine, and was featured on MTSU's agriculture website and brochures. These experiences helped me grow not only as a student and future professional, but also as a person.

After graduating from my undergraduate program, I decided to pursue a master's degree at MTSU and continue working at the farm. Looking back, I cannot imagine my life without MTSU. The school I once considered my last choice became the place where I found my passion, built lifelong relationships, discovered opportunities, and created some of my favorite memories.

To this day, I am incredibly grateful to Ms. Horton. Her simple suggestion completely changed the direction of my life. I often wonder where I would be if she had not encouraged me to give MTSU a chance. I will always be thankful that she did.

### **How did/is your program helping you prepare for your career/industry?**

My undergraduate degree was originally meant to prepare me for veterinary school. However, as graduation approached, I once again found myself feeling uneasy about leaving my family, friends, and the community I had built at MTSU. I knew I had to make a quick decision: graduate or continue my education. Since I was a Lightning Track student, the opportunity to continue at MTSU without having to go through an application process was a major factor in my decision to apply to the master's program. At the time, I was not completely sure what I wanted to do with my career anymore. I knew I still wanted to work in agriculture, but I was unsure what that would look like.

During this time, I met Dr. Michael White, who had pursued both an M.Ed. and an Ed.D. After hearing about his educational and professional journey, I became inspired to follow a similar path. He encouraged me to explore a career in education, and the more I thought about it, the more it felt like the right direction for me. Because of my passion for agriculture and my desire to make a difference through education, I decided to pursue a new career goal: becoming an agriculture professor.