Travis Little
OIT

Age: 20
Year: Senior
Major: Software engineering technology
Goal: to pursue graduate school and eventually work in bioelectric engineering

Travis loves the broad range of skills he's acquiring in OIT's software engineering technology program, which is giving him the knowledge to design and build any kind of program for computers or embedded devices from web development to applications. He first became interested in software when he was twelve years old and, he admits with laughter, started wondering just how video games are made. Travis was home schooled, so his father, a contractor, arranged for a client with a computer background to tutor Travis in exchange for construction work. Travis was hooked. Since then, he has learned that while video games are complex to design, he is more interested in projects with more real-world implications. He is particularly motivated by the practical, and humanistic, applications of software skills as they play out in bioelectric engineering. Recently he read in the news that a man was blinded in a construction accident, and scientists were able to design a camera and computer device which attached to his head that allowed him to "see" well enough to drive a car through a parking lot. Travis is intrigued by the technical elements of this device design, such as image processing, and is excited to be looking at graduate school in the bioelectric engineering field to explore the field. He's currently enjoying a project he's completing for his 3-D graphics class to design the software for a flag that will wave in the breeze, which allows him to research the physics that makes objects animate themselves and behave like they do in the real world. His family lives in Klamath Falls, so he decided to live at home during his college career, which in combination with an Admissions Scholarship and an Oregon Technology Foundation scholarship, made college affordable. He says that his parents consider education a tool, and there was never a doubt as to whether he would go to college. He believes his home school education prepared him well for college, as his family put a strong emphasis on self-motivation, and he was accustomed to "unit studies" in which he focused intently on single subjects. When they studied geology, for example, his father drove them to about every roadside cut in Oregon to study and examine it. He also learned that learning requires "buckling down and just doing the work," and he has clearly done just that in his college career.