

Growing up in Olympia I have always felt a connection to the natural world. The cultural emphasis in the Pacific Northwest on the importance of the environment was a formative part of my education and upbringing. The values I was taught growing up led to me pursuing a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Carroll College in Helena, Montana, where I will graduate from this coming May. My experience studying environmental science as an undergraduate has given me a greater appreciation for the planet and inspired me to pursue a graduate degree to expand my knowledge about the environmental issues we are facing as a society.

Attending Carroll College has been a great experience for both personal and educational growth. As a liberal arts school I have taken a broad variety of classes here, including many outside of the scientific disciplines. Some of these include environmental ethics, native american studies, and cultural anthropology. These classes all covered human societal relationships with the natural world, which has given me a broader view on environmental issues beyond the science behind them. Within my major, I have taken classes on a broad variety of environmental topics, which has given me a great baseline level of understanding on a variety of topics. I have a particular interest in the ecological side of environmental studies, so the focus area of my degree is Wildlife and Landscape Ecology. Particular classes that have inspired me include conservation biology, ecology, and field zoology courses. The topics covered in these classes are of particular interest to me because they cover issues of human interaction with nature, and I would like to spend my future career working to help solve the environmental issues we have caused. I have appreciated the interdisciplinary nature of my education here and I believe it has prepared me well for a similar style of learning at Evergreen. I am very eager to study my specific interests while still incorporating other topics and disciplines to gain a greater understanding of how they interact with the world as a whole.

I have spent the last two summers working at jobs where I could gain experience working in the environmental field and learn more about what kind of career I want to pursue. In the summer of 2021 I worked as a forestry technician for the Forest Service. I was part of a wildland fire crew in the Olympic National Forest stationed out of Quilcene, Washington. The crew I was on was part of an interagency

team that worked in tandem with the Olympic National Park, so I got to work with both the Forest and National Parks services. This was a very valuable experience, I had the opportunity to work outdoors and help a community that has given me many great memories. Much of my time growing up in Washington was spent in the Olympics, so working to protect the area from fires as well as assisting in efforts making sure recreational opportunities for others remained safe and fun was very fulfilling. I learned about fire and forest management, which included many practical applications of what I had previously only learned about in school. I also was introduced to other work the Forest Service does, and a lot of their work is very interesting to me.

This past summer I had an internship with Weyerhaeuser's production forestry team as a nursery research intern based out of Centralia, Washington. This experience was also very valuable and further inspired me to pursue a graduate degree. My primary duties at this internship were to assist with research being conducted at Weyerhaeuser's nurseries in the Northwest region, namely at their Mima and Rochester nurseries. Much of my time was spent on a growth tracking study at the Mima nursery, which is a bare root nursery. I collected data and helped with its processing to see how different treatments were affecting the different groups of seedlings. We used this data to assist the operations teams at the nurseries, determining the best strategies of planting density and water and fertilizer application to maximize survivorship of the seedlings. I also helped with other smaller projects throughout the summer such as testing soil plug integrity, assisting with drone flights to monitor an herbicide experiment, and creating pressure-volume curves to find the wilting point of seedlings. This experience was very valuable because it showed me how research is conducted in a professional setting, both through laboratory and field work. Working with a whole team of people who have PhDs was inspiring, and being able to help them design and implement studies gave me more confidence in my own skills as a researcher.

Between my two work experiences I have learned what it is like to work for both public and private entities and the pros and cons of both. When I was working for the public I was fulfilled by helping other people have meaningful experiences connecting with nature. Working for a private company I enjoyed conducting research and applying my scientific knowledge. Both work and undergraduate

experiences have furthered my desire to pursue a graduate degree so I can learn more about the environment to best help others. Being born and raised in Olympia, the Puget Sound area gave me so much growing up and I know how unique of an area it is. Living in Montana for the past four years has been an amazing experience and expanded my worldview, and I now want to use what I have learned to give back to the people in the area that raised me. I believe climate change and other problems associated with it are the greatest threat we are currently facing, and I want to further my education so I can be best equipped to help respond to these issues. I believe Evergreen presents the perfect opportunity for me to further my educational goals while providing the opportunity to learn more about where I am from and help the people who also call it home.