

Since moving to the Pacific Northwest in 2019, this place has taught me many lessons. It had been my intention from the start to become a part of its ecosystem, at first through restoration ecology with Earthcorps, a conservation crew model and a field I hadn't been familiar with on the east coast barely at all. My studies in senior year of undergrad had led me towards sustainable agriculture and it felt like a natural extension to engage with restoring local habitat.

I believe fundamentally we owe our effort to the communities we find ourselves in and choose to be a part of. I first heard of Evergreen from an acquaintance who had attended Evergreen for undergrad. They showed me their neighborhood in Seattle when I was brand new to the area and I'm so grateful they did. Another helping hand was a lucky random roommate turned lifelong friend who grew up here in the PNW. She brought me to Carkeek park and taught me how to identify firs by their spokes. Not only the people but the plants themselves are incredible teachers too. Throughout my restoration work I've become fond of all of the native plants, but huckleberry, and in particular red huckleberry has a special place in my heart. I always find it growing on nurse logs, so particularly, and using the growth of before to support itself now. Above all I see these plants as a testament to generosity, and how we can give of ourselves in ways that aren't self-sacrificial, but rather part of a mutual benefit.

During my time in Seattle, I've volunteered with urban farms and food forests, gardening alliances for composting, and I'd like to continue learning about agriculture and the ways in which we can adapt it for the future of our ecosystems and biodiversity on this planet. One such place I dove into this learning was by taking a course to become a Master Composter and Sustainability Steward with the Tilth alliance. It was great to meet like minded people who were just as into soil and soil stewardship as I was, and to learn I'm far from alone in the opinion that to help our ecosystems we need to pay better attention to the ground beneath our feet, lest we take it for granted. One project I enjoyed working on for that class was getting to share knowledge with community members about compostable items.

In the professional sphere, I've been working in habitat restoration and environmental education. And it's been an incredible honor to teach and be taught about the critical role of salmon in the northwest ecosystems. Every day I'm kindly challenged by peers and supervisors to find ways to empathize and adjust language and adjust how I teach, so that every student can benefit, and I'm so grateful to be part of a professional community that acts with such care.

I'd like to study at Evergreen, because, while I've learned and unlearned a lot in the past five years, I know there's still more to understand, more perspectives to take in, and I hope my communities will benefit from what I learn and bring back.