

"We cannot solve
the problems that
we have created
with the same
thinking that cre-
ated them."

—Albert Einstein

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Newsletter of the Graduate Program on the Environment at The Evergreen State College

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WINTER 2008

Passionate about Climate Change: MES student coordinates upcoming event, Focus the Nation

By Chelsie Papiez
MES Student

I am a second-year MES student actively working as the coordinator for Evergreen's Focus the Nation event. Focus the Nation is a nationwide climate change initiative hosted by over 1,000 colleges and universities to promote solutions and political action around climate change. It is turning out to be the largest teach-in day in American history! Evergreen's day of action is January 30th, 2008.

My passion for climate change led me to pursue a graduate degree. Like most people, I took some time off after graduation from college to decide what I wanted to do. I took a job with the Na-

tional Wildlife Federation, one of our largest national environmental nonprofits, as their Education Outreach Coordinator. My focus was on educating English language learner (ELL) high school students about global climate change. What an opportunity to empower our youth on such a "heated" topic! I ran with it and organized climate change

activities and retreats focused on the global connections from our food to transportation. Through this experience I was encouraged to go back to school and make climate change the focus of my work. I cannot say that all the graduate programs I applied to were as interested in climate change as I was, but Evergreen's Master of Environmental Studies program was a great choice because it promotes flexibility in one's degree focus.

Originally from Olympia, I was excited to study at Evergreen and enjoy all the comforts of my home town. My first objective was to find a way to connect to the sustainability efforts Evergreen is making on campus. I joined the Clean Energy Commit-

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Chelsie on top of Mt. Ellinor

New Sustainability Task Force Coordinator

By Lindsy Wright
MES Student

I am a first-year MES student and Evergreen's newly-appointed Sustainability Task Force Coordinator. The Sustainability Task Force is a proactive group of Evergreen faculty, staff, and students who are committed to practicing daily sustainable habits by activating Evergreen's master plan. This plan includes my commencement of calculating Evergreen's carbon inventory, begun by John Pumilio, and helping apply for awards in sustainability.

My work with the Sustainability Task Force has immersed me in multiple facets of sustainability in

higher education. I coordinate with and learn from the Sustainability Task Force and its chair and co-chair, Steve Trotter and Nancy Parkes, who lead me in the right direction and help me participate in keeping Evergreen's sustainability momentum going. I am also researching Evergreen sustainability practices and working to publicize them on the Sustainability Task Force website, <http://www.evergreen.edu/sustainability/home.htm>.

I grew up in Spokane, Washington and spent summers on the farm in southern Idaho. After graduating from Evergreen in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science degree, I found myself living dif-

ferently. Evergreen infiltrated my ideas of the world; I found myself buying local, carpooling, and generally downsizing my life. I believe in what Evergreen stands for, and I think the world could be more pleasant if everyone lived according to Evergreen's ideals. I look forward to connecting with students, faculty, and staff to keep illuminating "sustainability intersections" here at Evergreen.

Lindsy
spends most
of her spare
time having
fun with her
daughter
and two
dogs.



Field Experience in Salmon Ecology Class

By Dana Kiehl
MES Student, Editor

On a foggy November morning, MES students gather in the Evergreen parking lot with their spiral notebooks and hip waders, ready for another day of class. This is no ordinary class: this is The Behavior and Ecology of Pacific Salmon and Trout, taught by Larry Dominguez, a Salmon and Aquatic Ecologist with Washington State's Department of Natural Resources and adjunct professor in the MES program. Larry teaches this class with a focus on field experience, with approximately 60% of the class taught in the field, directly observing salmon and their habitats.

Today the class is heading out to Kennedy Creek, about 20 minutes from Evergreen's campus, to observe chum salmon spawning behavior. The creek is a busy place this morning, with salmon actively vying for mates and the opportunity to pass their genes to the next generation. In small groups, students choose an active redd, or spawning nest, and collect data on salmon behavior for later analysis. In addition, students learn about effects of sediments on incubation success of salmon eggs and use a device called a McNeil cylinder to collect core samples of the gravel along the creek bed.

This is one day of many in the field for these students, including trips to streams in Puget Sound and the Pacific coast, each day with different activities and learning objectives. The highlight is an overnight field trip around the Olympic Peninsula, with stops at the Quinault River, Elwha River, and Hood Canal, among other destinations. The field experi-



Students Daniel Laggner and Jana Ffitch take a core gravel sample from the creek bank.

anced approach gives students breadth of understanding in both science and policy realms, preparing them for possible future work in the field.

"The class provides students with the knowledge and tools they need to address local environmental problems with far-reaching effects..."

ence gives students the opportunity to see salmon in different settings and habitats around the area and discuss current issues related to salmon. "The course focused on a lot of hot salmon topics, such as hatcheries, dams, habitat loss, and restoration practices, all of which were things we saw in the real world," says Jeremy Lucas, a second-year MES student in the class.

The field work is complemented with lectures, guest speakers, and academic readings, such as journal articles and a text book, which provide background information and help with interpretation of students' field observations. The Pacific salmon is a thread that unites many aspects of Northwest ecosystems, and to understand salmon ecology requires understanding of geology, climate, rivers, estuaries, and marine ecosystems. Students are also able to delve deeper into a topic of their own choosing in a research paper. This bal-

Some students are taking their learning a step further and are getting involved in promoting healthy salmon habitats in Beatty Creek, a local stream. Students Lindsay Wright, Sarah Clarke, Betsy Dicke, and Bonnie Guyer-Graham got together to draft a proposal for submission to regional salmon restoration funding programs. They propose to use large woody debris left over after clearing land for development to provide habitat for juvenile salmon and trap spawning gravel for adults. This debris, which would otherwise be hauled away or burned, may provide a low-cost option to aid in stream restoration.

Due to the local relevance, hands-on experience, and quality instruction, this class is a favorite among students. Lindsay Wright, a first-year MES student, comments that the class "just makes learning fun. [Larry] obviously loves what he does, and his enthusiasm makes you want to learn!" The class provides students with the knowledge and tools they need to address local environmental problems with far-reaching effects, making for holistic, memorable learning experiences that undoubtedly leave a lasting impression in students' minds.



Larry Dominguez helps Ashley Lyon and Jeff Fischer interpret salmon behavior at Kennedy Creek.

MES Student Assists on Curriculum for the Bioregion

By Lucienne Guyot
MES Student

I am a second-year MES student working with Jean MacGregor on the Curriculum for the Bioregion, an initiative that encourages Washington's higher education teachers to integrate sustainability into their curricula. Local environmental knowledge and experiential learning are key ideas in this project.

When I moved to Olympia to attend Evergreen, I was prepared to wait for the perfect environment-related job, preferably at a convenient location. Jean MacGregor, MES faculty and environmental education expert, came to our first-year orientation to recruit a Graduate Research Assistant for her Curriculum for the Bioregion project, a part of Evergreen's Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education. A previous co-worker knew Jean and sang her praises to me as I was leaving Seattle to come to school here. I wanted the job. It was the only one I applied for. I wore my best interview clothes and showed up early to meet with Jean. Competition was fierce, but I made the cut.

Jean's aims for the curriculum are as follows: "The Curriculum for the Bioregion initiative's overall goal is to better prepare undergraduates, as well as ourselves, to live in a world where the complex issues of environmental quality, environmental justice, and sustainability are paramount."

The Curriculum for the Bioregion is in the 2nd year of its grant phase and is funded by the local Russell Family Foundation, a member of the Environmental Grantmakers Association. The current name of the project is "Sustainability Across the Curriculum." We are guided by a steering committee of representatives from a number of Washington institutions of higher learning, including 2-year community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities.

In my position with Jean, I work alongside our new Graduate Research Assistant, second-year MES student Natalie Pyrooz. As research assistants, we mine the web for cross-disciplinary curricula with a sustainability/environmental, and preferably bioregional, focus. We maintain a website with bioregional resources for teachers, staff, and

faculty members, including bibliographies, curricular materials, links to local organizations, websites, and many other resources. This keeps Natalie and me abreast of major current issues in sustainability and the environment. The two of us also help Jean prepare for events, including conferences, faculty learning communities, and curriculum development gatherings intended to help educators integrate sustainability into their courses—especially high-enrollment courses, such as English 101. Jean has recently held two faculty learning communities at Pack Forest, for an English faculty group and a Biology Faculty group. I am also involved in keeping track of our budget and researching local, regional, and national foundations for funding future years of the project.

Please visit our website at <http://www-evergreen-edu/washcenter/project.asp?pid=62> for more information.



Lucienne works with MES Faculty Jean MacGregor on the Curriculum for the Bioregion.

Introducing New MES Faculty Alison Styring

By Alison Styring
MES Faculty

I am having a great time teaching in the MES program. In fall, I taught the introductory course PEEP, and I'm teaching Ecological and Social Sustainability in the winter with Linda Moon Stumpff and Peter Dorman. This spring, I'm teaching an elective focused on bird research and monitoring methods.

My background is in tropical field ornithology, and much of my work has focused on bird conservation and forest management in Southeast Asia. I also have a lot of ex-

perience with natural history collections, and I'm currently curator of The Evergreen State College Natural History Collections. I am passionate about birds, and they are the lens through which I study ecological concepts.

I also love teaching, and I particularly enjoy seeing students pursue their passions. The integrative and interdisciplinary structure of the MES curriculum challenges both students and teachers to step outside their comfort zones and learn about environmental problems from a variety of perspectives. This approach produces successful,

broadly-thinking MESers and has caused me to view my own work with a broader perspective. I'm looking forward to the next two years in MES and hope to see many of you in class!

Alison Styring received a BA in Biology from Indiana University, Bloomington and her PhD in Biological Sciences from Louisiana State University. She loves to travel, run, surf, bird, spend time with friends and family, and play with her dogs.



Alison Styring watching a Short-tailed Hawk nest

Sara Ann Bilezikian Fellowship Recipient

By Laura Todis
MES Student



Laura Todis,
recipient of
the Bilezikian

As the current recipient of the Sara Ann Bilezikian Fellowship, I was honored to meet Sophie Bilezikian earlier this month. Sophie and John Bilezikian generously created this fellowship for an MES student after the loss of their daughter, Sara, as a way of supporting causes that were important to her. The fellowship assists students

who demonstrate a commitment to social and environmental advocacy and who have strong academic skills. It was especially poignant to meet Sophie, as I have discovered that I have a personal connection to this fellowship. Sara was a close friend to many people I know within activist circles on both coasts. I have heard many loving stories and thoughts about Sara over the past three years, as she had a profound effect on her friends and community. I was touched to be able to share this connection with the Bilezikians.

I was honored to have been awarded the fellowship this year, as it will help me tremendously with my education. It is encouraging to be supported in my ambition to further causes of social and environmental justice. I have found the MES program to be a great match for me so far, and I feel fortunate for this fellowship as I work toward my degree.

Laura Todis is from Eugene, Oregon and graduated from Tufts University in Boston with a BA in Anthropology and Environmental Studies.

Environmental Education in Kenya

By Maki Kitabayashi
MES Alumna



**Maki in front of
Lake Nakuru**

I graduated from MES in June 2005 with a focus on environmental education. I returned to my native country of Japan in September 2006, after working as an intern on exhibit design in zoos for the Wildlife Conservation Society. Due to difficulty finding work related to environmental education or exhibit design in Japan, I joined a program where the Japanese government sends skilled Japanese workers to developing countries. This is a 2-year contract, working in various fields and with various organizations.

I was sent to Lake Nakuru National Park in Kenya as an education officer working under Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). KWS is currently developing conservation education programs, starting with some parks as model cases. Lake Nakuru National Park is one of the most visited parks in Kenya and is listed as a wetland of international impor-

tance. The lake is a soda lake with four inlets. Flamingoes feed on plankton and algae at the lake, attracting tourists from around the world.

Lake Nakuru has some interesting features from an environmental viewpoint. Nakuru is the fourth largest town in Kenya. The park is the only park in Kenya that is enclosed by a solar electric fence, originally installed to protect rhinoceros from poachers. Water management is an important issue for local people and also for maintaining flamingo populations. As deforestation and population expansion continue, it is necessary for different sectors to work together to tackle conservation issues.

My duties as an education officer at the Lake Nakuru National Park Education Center include operations of environmental conservation education for schools and residents in the area, development of an information center at the park, development of teaching material for environmental conservation education, and rein-

forcement of solidarity with the research department in the park and the area's environmental NGOs. I am especially excited about developing an information center at the park, due to my educational background and the possibility of this spreading to other parks in Kenya.

My environmental education focus in MES led to my thesis, "Museum Exhibits as Informal Venues for Environmental Learning," which has been applicable to my work here. Other MES classes on wetland ecology, protected areas, the ecology of harmful algal blooms, and case studies on water have also helped me understand different perspectives on conservation within the park and in Kenya.

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to apply and have hands-on experiences with what I have learned in MES.

Maki Kitabayashi is from Tokyo and is fond of frogs, who are occasional visitors to her house in Kenya.

Passionate about Climate Change (continued)

tee during my first year. Through my work on the committee I learned about our student-imposed tax to the purchase of our energy offsets from wind- and biomass-generated power. Annually, ten percent of this tax is set aside for on-campus, student-driven clean energy projects. We, the Clean Energy Committee, are in charge of approving student projects and awarding funding through a grant application process. Check us out online: www.evergreen.edu/cleanenergy.

Now, Focus the Nation is fast approaching! Evergreen will be hosting workshops all day on January 30th. These will be focused on local and regional issues and solutions, from food to transportation. Come hear a report on what Evergreen is actively doing to reduce our carbon footprint for the goal of carbon neutrality by 2020.

Campus activities will include the opportunity to calculate your personal carbon footprint and take a pledge to reduce it in some way. This may be by taking public transit,

biking more, eating locally, or turning down the heat in your home. Everyone is encouraged to take an additional step forward on January 30 in enhancing their commitment to reduce their carbon footprint. All of these workshops are open to students, faculty, staff, and the public. Best of all it is FREE. Faculty are encouraged to include Focus the Nation activities into their program's schedule.

A variety of community groups will join us for the day, providing information on how we can work as a community to reduce our carbon emissions. Please come and check out all the great educational material. There will be information on habits you never even thought about changing that can really have an effect on our climate.

Following our daytime activities, we will move as a community at 7:00 p.m. down to the Washington Center for the Performing Arts for a community forum, "Creating a Climate of Change: A Community Forum on Climate Change in the Pacific Northwest." The evening

event will be hosted by Evergreen, St. Martin's University, South Puget Sound Community College, and Centralia College. The forum is set up as an opportunity to influence our local leaders and to educate ourselves on community problems we face. This is another FREE event open to all. Our local representatives will be present to discuss their leadership roles in the face of climate change. The latest policy and science reports will be announced by expert panelists from Climate Solutions, The Nature Conservancy, and University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group. Join us for this momentous event to help kick off community efforts on climate change issues in the Pacific Northwest.

For more information on Focus the Nation please visit

www.evergreen.edu/focusthenation or contact me at fncoord@evergreen.edu.

"With my love for the outdoors, climate change is always on my mind."



Opportunities for Giving

The Evergreen State College's Master of Environmental Study degree provides graduates strong analytical skills and the ability to approach problems with cohesive, integrated solutions. Graduates and current students are working in the field, developing the skills and knowledge to build sustainable environments for today and the future.

A donation to the MES Fellowship Fund allows Evergreen to attract and retain the best students, some of whom may have otherwise been shut out due to financial need. That is why your investment in our students is so vital. Last year, the Foundation awarded nearly \$19,000 in fellowships for MES students. These awards are possible because

of generous individuals, just like you. Won't you consider a donation to support the work of our students?

Donations for fellowships may be made annually or with an endowment—a gift that is invested to create a permanent resource for fellowships. Our goal by the end of the 2007-2008 academic year is to secure an additional \$250,000, which would fund \$12,500 annually to support MES students.

The Evergreen State College Foundation gladly receives your gifts by check or credit card, or you may give automatically by setting up payments through your bank, on Evergreen's secure website, evergreen.edu/give, or by phone:

(800) 761-7861 or (360) 867-6300. You may also make a gift of appreciated securities, real estate, or give through your estate.

For more information, please contact The Evergreen State College Foundation at (360) 867-5029. Checks may be mailed to:

The MES Fellowship Fund
The Evergreen State College Foundation
2700 Evergreen Pkwy NW
Olympia, WA 98505.



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"Everyone is encouraged to take an additional step forward on January 30th ... to reduce their carbon footprint"

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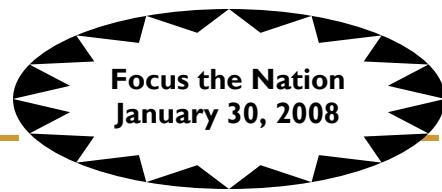
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Graduate Study at Evergreen

- ◆ MES integrates the study of the biological, physical and social sciences with public policy.
- ◆ Its core curriculum explores the interactions among environmental problems, policy responses and environmental science.
- ◆ Electives and a thesis project allow students to develop specialized skills and knowledge in areas of their choice.
- ◆ Faculty members come from biological, physical, social science, providing a full understanding of environmental issues.
- ◆ The program is centered on highly participatory evening classes that accommodate full- or part-time students.
- ◆ MES alumni combine an interdisciplinary understanding of environmental sciences with the skills and wisdom to intelligently address environmental problems.
- ◆ Many alumni are employed in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, while others continue their graduate study in related PhD programs.



Letter from the Director

Students profiled in this issue of MES messages are leaders in Evergreen's pursuit of sustainability. These are students who do not want a passive educational experience, so they have sought out ways to make a difference by enrolling in the MES Program.

The Evergreen State College leadership, from President Les Purce on down, has committed this college to becoming environmentally sustainable and, to get the job done, the college has turned to MES students like Lindsay Wright. A first-year MES student, Lindsay has taken over the reins as Coordinator of the Evergreen's Sustainability Task Force, succeeding John Pumilio, who held that position until he graduated with an MES degree last year.

As another example of the essential role of MES students in the college,

MES student Chelsie Papiez was appointed to be the Coordinator of Evergreen's very important Focus the Nation event on January 30, 2008.

On the educational front, the college has turned to MES students Lucienne Guyot and Natalie Pyrooz to provide research assistance to develop the Curriculum for the Bioregion initiative, one of the most innovative and promising environmental education initiatives in the country.

These are just a few examples of the essential



Ted Whitesell, Director of the Graduate Program on the Environment

roles that MES students are playing in this college. Other colleges and regional municipalities are turning to current MES students to help them live up to their sustainability commitments as well. MES student leadership in local and regional sustainability work is a vital component of the active learning community that is The Evergreen State College.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Whitesell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "W" at the beginning.

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