

University of Washington Alumni Winner of the 2008 Bullitt Foundation Environmental Fellowship

Clarita Lefthand, a PhD student in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, has been elected to receive the Bullitt Environmental Prize. This award carries a \$100,000 cash award, which Clarita can use for her research over the next two years.

The Bullitt Environmental Prize is awarded by the Bullitt Foundation, a private, non profit organization whose main purpose is to promote the safety and maintenance of the natural environment, specifically in the Pacific Northwest, through responsible and safe human activities. A vital force for environmental protection, the Bullitt Foundation was started in 1952 by Dorothy Bullitt, a prominent Seattle businesswoman and philanthropist. This foundation is also in part responsible for many of Seattle's most significant institutions, including Children's Hospital, the Seattle Symphony, and Cornish School of Arts.



A member of the Navajo Nation in Arizona, now residing in Seattle, Clarita Lefthand's professional goals are to teach biology, conduct pathogenesis research, promote science education among Natives and address environmental issues that impact them. Her commitment to the Native American community extends from her research at the University of Washington, to serving as a role model for younger Native American students. Her research was selected to be presented to the National Environmental Health Association and the American Society for Microbiology.

For her master's thesis, Clarita researched the estuarine waters of the Tulalip Bay, tracking microbial sources of fecal contamination. Using the tools of environmental microbiology, she did her research in ways that directly addressed tribal concerns of the Tulalip Tribe. This research is helpful in finding the source of the contamination, and may also provide a way of controlling the pollutant.

