CINNABAR
FOUNDATION

LEONARD & SANDY SARGENT EVST GRADUATE FELLOW

2026-27 Grace (G) Bolesta

Grace (G) Bolesta's interest in environmental issues is largely shaped by the big rivers and old-growth trees surrounding St. Louis, MO, where they grew up. Since then, environmental issues have colored their academic and personal interests.

G graduated from Colorado State University (CSU) with a BA in Environmental Policy and Ethnic Studies. While there, G wrote and published work on the possibility environmental education's role as a tool for creating a liberatory future that seeks to denaturalize white supremacist logics embedded in Western environmental management, thereby creating the material conditions for equitable environmental management. G also worked through the Northern Colorado Environmental Justice Group, a student run organization at CSU, to organize and promote equitable environmental policies and practices in Fort Collins, CO.

Since graduating, G has worked as a farmer in New Mexico focusing on increasing food access and soil health. Through securing grants such as the New Mexico Healthy Soils Grant, G has collaborated to advance soil conservation in the Rio Grande Valley. They worked with local farmers to improve food access as well as to increase equitable land distribution. Through G's work in sustainable agriculture and agroecology, they were recognized by organizations such as Patagonia. By creating diverse partnerships, G works towards cultivating healthier food systems and communities.

In addition to G's work in sustainable agriculture, they volunteer for several local organizations working to redistribute wealth and create opportunities for unhoused people. They see addressing wealth inequality as a critical avenue for addressing environmental issues.

While studying at the University of Montana as the 2026–27 Sargent EVST Graduate Fellow, G is excited to explore solutions to declining soil health in agricultural systems.