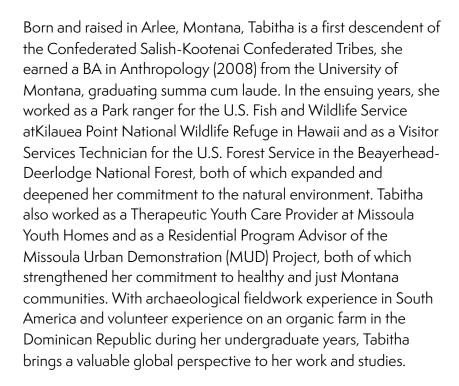


LEONARD & SANDY SARGENT EVST GRADUATE FELLOW

2015-16

Tabitha Espinoza

Tabitha Espinoza entered the Environmental Studies (EVST) Master's Program at the University of Montana in Fall 2015. She was selected for the Sargent Fellowship on the basis of her "demonstrated commitment to the environment, commitment to healthy and equitable communities in Montana, and on the tremendous promise the faculty sees in her as an important future leader in both environmental and social arenas."



Tabitha has a strong commitment to her homelands and communities on the Flathead Reservation in Western Montana. To complement her Master's studies, Tabitha works part-time as a Program Coordinator of the Missoula Girl's Using Their Strengths (GUTS!) Program. Her goal in the EVST Masters Program involves multiple projects to bring her "skills and talents back home to benefit the land and people of the Flathead Reservation." The projects she has identified encompass examining existing



environmental education programs on Montana reservations and investigating how Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) can be applied in educational contexts to help native youth find meaning and forge better understanding of contemporary scientific methodologies.

Tabitha's long-range goal is to continue strengthening the Flathead Reservation tribes' historic stewardship of the natural environment while fostering the integrity and security of individual residents and reservation communities.

According to the UM EVST Program, Tabitha "would not likely have been able to attend the University of Montana without the fellowship support, professional encouragement, and honor that the Leonard and Sandy Sargent Environmental Studies Graduate Fellowship has provided."