

## LEONARD & SANDY SARGENT EVST GRADUATE FELLOW

2017-18

Rachel Ackerman

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Rachel Ackerman comes to the University of Montana EVST program after having received a Bachelor of Science in Education and Human Services from Ohio University in 2012. Born and raised in a Cleveland suburb, she spent much of her youth exploring the Cuyahoga Valley watershed and glacier-carved Ohio landscape.

While at Ohio University, Rachel was elected President of the student chapter of the Sierra Club, led the effort to eliminate coal as a fuel source at the University, and implemented sustainability events as part of the annual Earth Day celebrations.

Upon graduation, she was inducted as a corp member with the national teaching organization, Teach for America, and spent two-years as a middle school teacher in the Denver School of Science and Technology, founding their Adventure Club curriculum. This was followed by another two-year stint as an environmental educator at the Keystone Science School (Colorado) where she combined her passions of empowering youth and outdoor adventure.

Rachel's goals in the University of Montana Environmental Studies MS Program are to enhance and expand her science and teaching skills through studying environmental justice and traditional ecological knowledge. She remains committed to public education and intends to design projects for at-risk populations of youth and adults that enhance environmental sustainability, self-sufficiency, and overall public health.

Her ultimate goal is to "utilize acquired knowledge and skill sets at UMT in combination with my previous experience as an educator to empower self-sufficient, sustainable communities."

