

A close-up photograph of a young man with a friendly smile, wearing a green beanie and a blue jacket. The image is partially obscured by white, organic-shaped cutouts that frame the text.

IN  
*Our Own*  
WORDS

BURKE MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT

*2015*

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# *A year in stories*

This year, we asked a few of the people whose lives intersected with the Burke to share their experiences and perspectives. These are their stories.

With portraits by Andrew Waits.



IN MY OWN WORDS *Spirit in all things*

BY *Gene Tagaban/Buy Yaaw* I AM A *Storyteller*

Long ago, the human beings, the animals, all things, had no spirit. They were like shells. Not part of the earth or one with each other. No spirit.

Raven walking along the beach.

He looks far out to sea and sees an island of fire throwing flames into the nighttime sky. Raven wants that fire for all the creatures of the world. But Raven is not a good long distance flyer.

Hawk walking along the beach.

He is strong, proud of his long, straight beak. Raven asks, "Can you help me? I want you to get that fire for me."

"How am I going to do that?" asks Hawk.

Raven gets a branch and puts pitch on the end of it. He puts it into Hawk's beak and he tells him, "Have courage. Be brave. What you are doing, it is for all the creatures of the world."

Hawk flies far out to sea, far out there. He flies around the fire once, twice, three times. On the fourth time he flies right into it. Now Hawk has the fire and he flies back to shore. He's tired. He has been flying a long time. That fire is hot, melting his long straight beak down to the short curved beak it is now. Hawk is in pain but he hangs onto the fire because he knows what he is doing is for all the creatures of the world.

Raven sees Hawk is in trouble and he calls out to him, "Have courage. Be brave. What you are doing is a good thing!" Raven flies out to him and together they fly back to shore.

Raven takes that fire and he throws it into the rocks, the trees, the animals, all the things growing in the forest. He throws it in the human beings. Now we have the fire. Now we have the Spirit. Now we are alive. Now we are all part of it.

*we have the fire  
we have the spirit  
we are alive  
we are all part of it*



**Gene Tagaban**, "One Crazy Raven," is a Cherokee, Tlingit and Filipino storyteller. He performed at a rally held at the Burke on January 30, 2015 to celebrate the Seahawks' trip to Super Bowl XLIX and the museum's display of the Kwakwaka'wakw mask that inspired the team's original logo.



IN MY OWN WORDS Finding Washington's first dinosaur  
BY Brandon Peacock I AM A graduate student

We were expecting from the photos that it was going to be a big animal—definitely not a shell, which is what the people who first found it were looking for. Given that the rock that makes up Sucia Island was deposited around 80 million years ago, we thought it would be some sort of marine reptile from the age of dinosaurs.

If you've been to the San Juan Islands, you know there are a lot of rocky, low-lying beaches. When the tide goes out you have huge expanses that get exposed, and then very steep cliffs right at the edge of the beach. The fossil was on a beach like that, 10 or 15 feet away from cliff, right at the high tide line. There were barnacles living on the bone.

We got off the boat and right away I said, this is not a marine reptile. It was just too big, and when we looked at the specimen there was a tube of mud infilling what in life was a hollow cavity.

It has hollow bones and it's 80 million years old? Uh... it has to be a dinosaur. I was sold right away.

A lot of features that were scientifically helpful to confirming our suspicions were not visible until we spent a year and a half cleaning the rock away from the bone in the lab. Eventually we figured out that it was a femur based on the general shape and the anatomy, including a ridge that is diagnostic for large, meat-eating dinosaurs.

In North America about 80 million years ago, pretty much the only very large carnivorous dinosaurs were in the tyrannosaurid group. So we had that and the fact that it was hollow bone, which is really a clincher for putting it on the line of dinosaurs related to modern-day birds.

Officially this dinosaur is just an indeterminate theropod, but we nicknamed it *Suciasaurus*. Washington is the 37<sup>th</sup> state to find a dinosaur. If you look at the geology of the remaining states, it's unlikely we'll get to 38. Then again, people said the same thing about Washington.

*I was  
sold  
right  
away*



**Brandon Peacock** is a Burke Museum and UW Department of Biology graduate student researching land-living animals from the Permian and Triassic periods. Brandon and Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology Christian Sidor described Washington's first dinosaur fossil in the journal "PLOS ONE" in May 2015.



IN MY OWN WORDS Monitoring the health of Puget Sound  
BY Maggie Dutch I AM A benthic ecologist

In the mid-'90s, our unit lead connected with a U.S. Geological Survey scientist in California who had started a project looking at foraminifera—tiny, one-celled creatures that live at the bottom of the ocean. When we collected our samples, we started taking an extra spoonful of sediment and sending it down to her lab.

Over time the project transitioned to Washington. We've been sending our samples to Liz and Ruth at the Burke for ten years now. It's an easy thing for us to do, and it stretches the scientific information our project can provide.

Our monitoring program samples sediment in eight regions and six urban bays throughout Puget Sound. In our studies, we look for chemical contaminants, we do toxicity tests, and we count and identify the macro-invertebrates to determine their health and community structure.

Over time we have seen a decline, but we haven't seen a large correspondence between the chemicals we measure and the changes in the communities we are looking at. Liz has seen a similar decline in foraminifera in some locations. Her results add to our body of knowledge and the weight of evidence that there is something else going on.

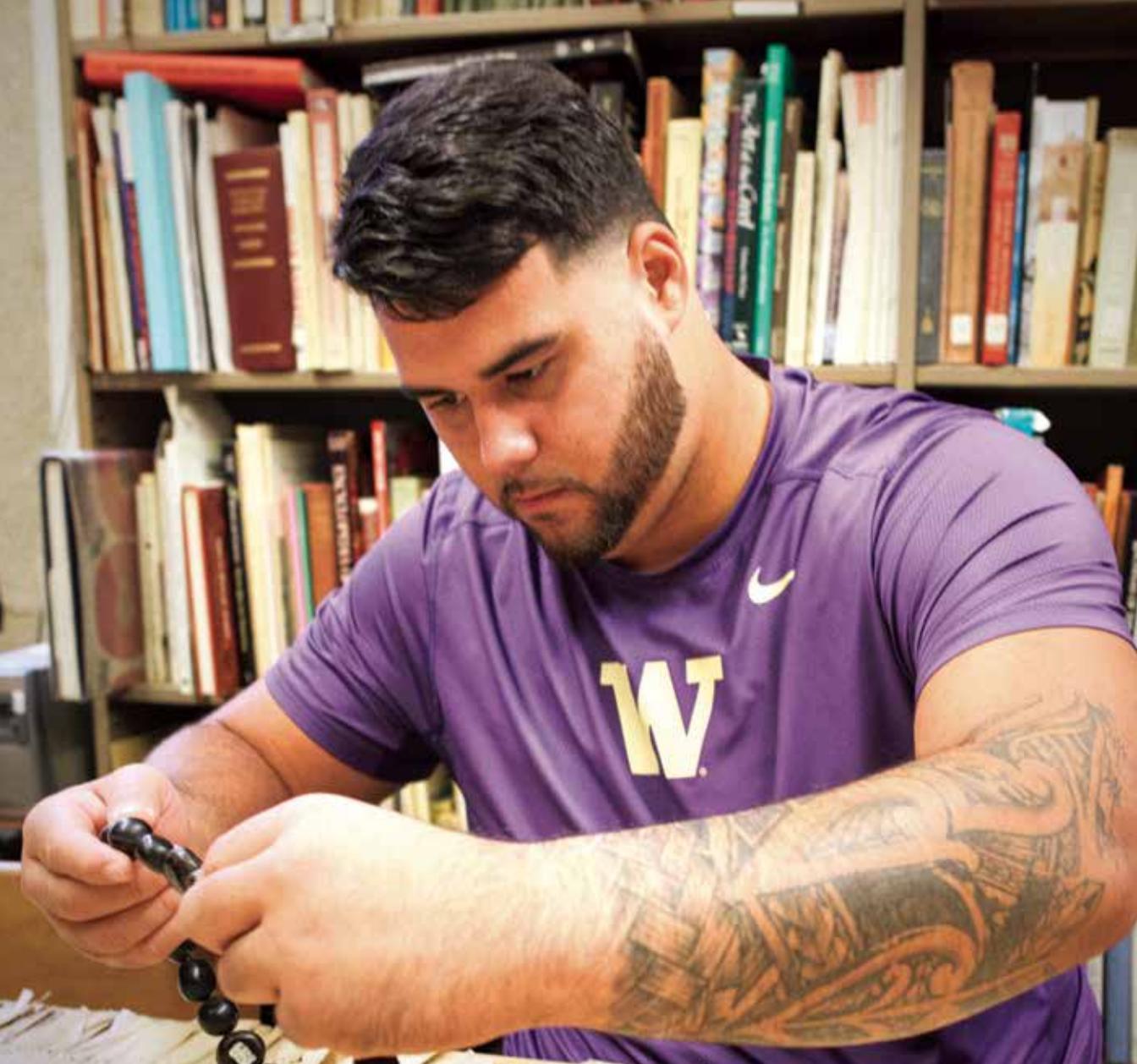
We are working on a new project plan that includes where and how you sample, and an updated parameter list. There are some chemicals we won't be looking for anymore because they have been undetected for many years and are not corresponding with the community shifts. Then there are things we haven't measured, like nutrients and dissolved oxygen levels in sediments, which we want to add in order to see if there is a better correspondence to changes we have seen.

We went to different groups involved in the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program and presented them with an overview of the data and our plans going forward. There are so many groups out there looking at different components of the ecosystem—we want to make changes in line with their work. It doesn't happen in a vacuum.

*It doesn't happen in a vacuum*



**Maggie Dutch** is the Marine Sediment Monitoring Team lead for the WA State Dept. of Ecology Marine Monitoring Unit, which provides sediment samples analyzed by Curator of Invertebrate and Micro-Paleontology Liz Nesbitt in the Burke's Puget Sound Foram Research Lab.



IN MY OWN WORDS Love for people, love for culture

BY Cory Fuavai I AM Samoan

One of the messages I give to younger kids is: don't be embarrassed of your culture. Don't be embarrassed of where you come from.

I started working at the Burke my freshman year. I remember thinking, people need to know about this. A lot of Polynesian kids won't get the opportunity to learn about our culture, to tell people about where we come from and give life to the objects that are back here collecting dust.

I want to become a Matai—a high chief, someone that can speak for my family. I was born and raised in American Samoa. I speak Samoan fluently, but I struggle with the Matai language. At funerals, weddings, any big gatherings, my dad, my grandpa, my family members that have the high chief status will speak in this language.

To me, it's like a poem. I want to be able to understand it and communicate with my dad or my grandpa. Understanding the objects will only make my learning, my understanding of my culture, even better.

I picked the fala mats as one of the objects I wanted to study because as kids, we used to sit and watch my grandma, my mom and all the ladies in our family prepare these mats. Falas are Samoan rugs—it's what we put down as decorations for our houses. A lot of Polynesians can't afford to buy the rugs we have in America. We use the resources God has given us in land and nature. Making falas is one of the ways we stay connected with our roots, our ground, where we come from.

Back in the old days, I know they wrapped people in falas when they passed away. I play football and it's a tough sport. I put the fala on my arm for that battle, to wrap my enemies in it and either take them with me or bury them. The waves connect me with my family back in Samoa, with the ocean. The heart is for my grandmother, who just passed away. Her name is Alofa. Translated into English, it means love.

Don't be  
embarrassed  
of where  
you come  
from



**Cory Fuavai** is a senior anthropology major at the UW and an offensive lineman for the Huskies. Cory works with Curator of Oceanic & Asian Culture Holly Barker to gain research and leadership experience at the Burke in support of his goal to become a Matai chief.

This picture has been temporarily removed out of respect for Chairman Boyd who sadly passed away in June 2016. We send our deepest condolences to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

**James Boyd** is Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. He spoke June 18 at a press conference announcing the first successful attempt to sequence the genome of Kennewick Man, which was found to be related to modern Native Americans.

IN MY OWN WORDS *The Ancient One is our ancestor*

BY *Chairman Jim Boyd* I AM *Colville*

I am chairman Jim Boyd from the Colville Reservation. Most of the tribes want the same thing: collectively, we want repatriation and reburial. We know who we are and we know that the Ancient One—Kennewick Man—is our ancestor.

It was a long process for us to decide to submit DNA. We talked to our elders, we talked to our council. There were many discussions because of the way science has treated our people in the past. It was a tough decision.

We are happy for the outcome. The outcome is good. But we knew what the outcome was going to be. It's that simple to us.

When we talk about him, we talk about all of us. That's what we are talking about. We are him, he is us. When we look at science, we look at what is handed down through our history. Our people have known who was here for generations and generations and generations. They've passed this down and they know who weren't here. That is why we were certain we knew what the findings were going to be.

*We are him,  
he is us*

Our cultures are so different. We're always waiting for science. There is this animosity, and as we've found, scientists have been wrong. We as Native people are skeptical about science, because even science can be political.

We look at it from a spiritual standpoint and we look at it from a traditional standpoint. This is about respect.

We have evidence now, but we're still in the process and we don't know where this is going to go. We're still concerned. We're hoping that the Army Corps of Engineers can help us with this process now.

I'm here to communicate that we want the Ancient One to be reburied, repatriated. That's something we've wanted since he was found. There need to be many more discussions between all of our tribes and others, but that's what I wanted to say.



IN MY OWN WORDS *Seeds of the New Burke*

BY *Bridget McNassar* I AM A *Native Plant Nursery Manager*

The camas prairie is a severely endangered ecosystem in Washington. Only five percent of the historic prairie lands are left, and many of the plants and animals are threatened. This is a loss in biodiversity and cultural heritage. Camas was an important food source for many Native American groups—with the added value that it is a very charismatic plant, with its stunning, but fleeting, display of purple blossoms in the spring.

It is incredibly rare to be able to collect wild camas seed in Washington. The San Juan Islands have some of the only remnants of camas prairies, but a lot of the areas are protected. Bill and Susan Potts generously offered to let us collect from their private property on Dinner Island, and our nursery staff spent a glorious July afternoon exploring the diversity of native plants near their home.

Summer is the perfect time to collect because the plants are dry but haven't dropped their seeds yet, and a lot of the lily species hold their seeds in an upward-facing cup. You just clip the stems and put them in bags, and later you shake the seeds off, clean them and store them in the fridge until you are ready to sow.

We will sow in the next couple weeks. Camas is very slow-growing. It takes three to five years until they are big enough to bloom, and we have four growing seasons until the installation of the camas field planned for the New Burke. With these particular species, it's a time commitment and a slow process of hoping and doing everything you can to ensure you have those plants ready to go.

The New Burke is going to showcase the living floral heritage of Washington state, and the camas field is a really unique landscape feature to attempt. The different ecosystems in the New Burke gardens—shady forest and sunny, exposed prairie—will show the diversity in our state and why that flora is important. It's not just a landscape to passively look at—it's something to actively experience.

*We will sow in the next couple weeks*



**Bridget McNassar** is the restoration projects and native nursery manager for Oxbow Farm and Conservation Center. The Center will provide Northwest native plants for the New Burke facility scheduled to open in 2019, thanks to generous support from owners Tom Alberg and Judi Beck.



IN MY OWN WORDS girls in science camp

BY Alise D. I AM A Scientist

Every day was another adventure. We got to go on field trips and meet scientists and look behind the scenes. We looked at DNA samples. We went down to the water and collected algae and looked at it under microscopes. It's interesting how small things can be in the world, compared to how big we are.

My favorite part was probably seeing the birds, because it's really cool how they get all the birds from different places, and they have so many birds that people give to them. They have nests and eggs and they collect feathers and wings, and they even have non-wild birds from the zoo. They do tests on them and it's very interesting.

Every bird I named they had. I love birds and I collect a lot of bird feathers. I have Northern Flicker feathers, Wild Turkey, Blue Jay... I've been really into birds for a while.

I'm really into a lot of scientific things because I want to be an engineer or a programmer when I grow up. I am just one of those people who is really curious. How do feathers attach to birds? I'm really interested in what things are made of. I have a lot of ideas for making certain things using creativity.

I heard on the radio that they showed a picture of woman engineer to people and most people said, "Oh she is a fashion model or a designer." That's because there are many men who are engineers and not as many women. I think we need more women engineers.

Men have the privilege of doing certain things. If we can't play baseball or football, why can men do it? We are the exact same. We are as strong as them and capable of doing things.

Next year it would be good if we could observe things a little more and make little drawings of leaves or make clay sculptures of animals. Or maybe blow things up. I know a safe way to do that.

*I think we  
need more  
women  
engineers*



**Alise D.** is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader in Seattle, Washington. She plays volleyball, sings, dances and makes art. This summer, Alise participated in the Burke's Girls in Science camp, which connects middle-school girls with female Burke and UW scientists to conduct hands-on experiments and participate in research.



IN MY OWN WORDS The beauty and humility of collecting  
BY Ethan Linck I AM A Ph.D. Student, UW Biology

After spending most of the summer teaching, I was able to join Burke ornithology's collecting expedition for the final week of the trip. My stint began in the Blue Mountains, a small range spanning northeast Oregon and southeast Washington. At 6,800' we camped alongside a meandering stream surrounded by low mountains. Each evening, a family of breeding Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) soared low above our camp. A first for me, their presence was a stirring reminder of the wildness at our doorstep.

For people who love birds, nature and animals—as I assure you, everyone who decides to pursue ornithology emphatically does—the idea of collecting is often hard to swallow. How do you justify taking a life for science? Amidst an epidemic of collapsing wildlife populations, how do you justify removing individuals from the breeding pool? Responding to these questions is beyond my pay grade, but it certainly pivots on a belief in the intrinsic value of knowledge, and the power of knowledge of our natural world to inform decisions dedicated to its preservation.

We spent a day hunting along a dry backbone of mountain at the edge of the Frank Church/River of No Return Wilderness, a 2.4 million-acre mosaic of healthy growth and apocalyptic burns that ominously portend the future of Western forests. It is home to hundreds of wolves and vicious wolf extermination campaigns, pyramidal heights and v-shaped canyons. I gazed into its depths and crossed the border a few times. It was enough to win me over, and promise myself I would come back.

I hunted alone the final morning to the trip, with little success. I was in Nez Perce territory, the steep prairie and ponderosa country east of Hell's Canyon bordering Highway 95. Not far beyond, the Palouse agricultural belt beckoned, with many hours separating me and home. I lingered for a while at a modest monument marking the site of an ambush in the Nez Perce War.

Science can be monotonous, frustrating and poorly compensated. But after the right kind of week in the field, it's hard to imagine doing anything else.

How do you justify taking a life for science?



**Ethan Linck** is a member of Curator of Birds John Klicka's lab and a graduate student in the UW Department of Biology. Burke ornithology expeditions contribute to the museum's collection, which includes more than 150,000 specimens and is one of the most actively used in the world.



IN MY OWN WORDS Shining a light on deep-sea biodiversity  
BY Ted Pietsch I AM A Ted

I went to grad school intending to be a herpetologist. During my first summer they gave me a job sorting five-gallon buckets of dead fish that were trawled up by a deep-water research vessel. And all of a sudden I saw these deep-sea anglerfishes. Big mouths, huge teeth, giant stomachs that expand—they can eat something bigger than themselves! Not to mention the parasitic reproduction. These are amazing things to a kid who grew up in southern Michigan. I completely forgot about snakes.

One of the things I tell my students is that the little things can be turning points. One conversation or experience can steer you in a different direction and be incredibly important in your life.

When I started out, everybody said, "Don't start working on anglerfishes. They're so rare, and they live really, really deep." And it's true, you go out on ships and try to find these things, and hope one might be alive, but more often than not you come up empty handed. That's why you have to look at museum collections. People say, "Are you going to travel when you retire?" But that's what ichthyologists do: tour the world to see collections, to sit and look at what's in jars.

In late '60s there were about 400 named anglerfishes. But when I looked closely, I realized a lot of people had described the same thing over and over again. Nobody realized how easy they were to understand. They have a little luring apparatus on the tip of their snout. With the deep-sea anglerfishes, it's species-specific—they are all different shapes, they have different arrangements of filaments and pigment patterns. In my dissertation, I narrowed it down to 130 species; there are 160 now.

We know a lot more than we used to, but there are so many more things someone could look at. No one has ever seen the chromosomes of these things—nobody knows whether they actually have two sets. People hypothesize that some anglerfishes are reproducing parthenogenetically—they're cloning. That would be a really neat thing to explore.

Nobody realized how easy they were to understand



**Ted Pietsch** retired in July after 37 years as Burke Museum curator of fishes and professor in the UW School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences. His work on anglerfishes is described in "Oceanic Anglerfishes: Extraordinary Diversity in the Deep Sea" (University of California Press, 2009).

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Amy Hirtzel  
Griffin Hoins  
Calie Holden  
Emma Holm  
Kathy Hopkins  
Donald Hopkins  
Peggy Hudson  
Caitlin Jirovsky  
Jens Johnson  
Bryan Kern

Kayoung Kim  
Rick Klauber  
Leah Kucera  
Alexa Laharty  
Jennifer Laird  
Benjamin Lansdell  
Brynn Larson  
Charlotte Lee  
Grace Lee  
Ben Lefebvre  
Tristan Levine  
Ethan Linck  
Gary Livingston  
Jonathan Loeffler  
Dennis Lund  
Michael Marsh  
Megan Mason  
Wendy McClure  
Doug McTavish  
Cecile Meister  
Kim Mentzos  
Carol Miller  
Leslie Milliman  
Suzann Montedonico  
Cricket Morgan  
Caitlin Mosher  
Daniuel Mount  
Martha Nester  
Gene Nester  
Chelsey Oedewaldt  
Charlie Omana  
Mara Page  
Sakara Perry  
Susan Peterson  
Nathan Phinney  
Ashley Pickard  
Kristina Pilat  
Nicole Plastino  
Les Podgorny  
Jack Polito  
Erika Price  
Jean Primozich  
Julianna Procopio  
Jean Ragland  
Alastair Ramsay  
Kayla Ramsey  
Laurel Ramseyer

Amber Raynsford  
Pakki Reath  
Mike Rich  
Ayla Riley-Horst  
Donna Ritchey  
Kayla Ritchie  
Marisa Rodriguez  
Ayda Rojhtantalab  
Kate Rosendale  
Christine Rounds  
Flavia Rousu  
Gina Rudisill  
Cathy Sander  
Tamlyn Sapp  
Jeneva Scherr  
Jillian Schleicher  
Della Scott  
Delaney Scott  
Sam Seramur  
Meera Sethi  
Drew Skinner  
David Slager  
Stephanie Smith  
Gregory Snelson  
David South  
Valerie Soza  
Cynthia Spurgeon  
Rita Stephenson  
Caroline Stinogel  
Zachary Stocks  
Breann Stoner  
Jordan Thompson  
Erica Tiedemann  
Cheryl Tshako  
Alyssa Van Arsdale  
Mariah Vane  
Jose Verdezoto  
Karen Waddell  
Robert L. Wiley Jr.  
Michael Wilson  
Beverly Witte  
Tom Wolken  
Tess Young  
Audrey Zehren  
Veronika Ziegler  
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Anonymous (2)  
The Moraine Foundation  
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Amanda & Dan Gomez  
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Glenn Light  
Bob Ohashi\*  
Samantha Porter  
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### \$1 to \$99

Clair Dickerson  
Douglas Shore

\*Denotes gift to Burke institutional planning efforts (2010).

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# 2015 BY THE NUMBERS

**110,000** Visitors to the Burke last year

**92,000** Pre-K–20 Students served through Burke Education Programs

**31,500** Students served on-site at the Burke Museum

**60,500** Students served in communities across Washington

**16,600** UW Students served last year

**21,500** Specimens loaned to researchers across the globe

**12,500** Volunteer hours dedicated to research and interpretive services

**13** New species identified by Burke researchers

With the support of museum donors, members, visitors, institutional partners, the University of Washington and the State of Washington, the museum's financial health remained strong in fiscal year 2015.

## Burke Museum Fiscal Year 2015 *Period ending 6/30/2015*

### Revenue

● UW/Arts & Sciences	3,321,812
● UW In-kind Support	2,759,515
● Restricted Funds Released	1,391,712
● Gifts	852,579
● Earned Income	807,913
● Endowment	674,003

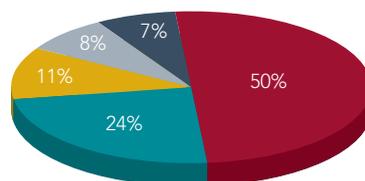
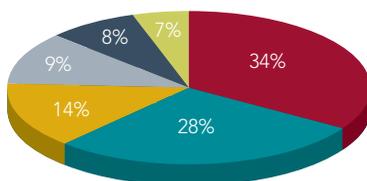
**Total** **9,807,534**

### Expenses

● Research & Collections	4,846,446
● Interpretive Services	2,380,341
● Administration	1,076,474
● Education	744,322
● Fundraising	640,300

**Total** **9,687,883**

**Change in Net Assets** **119,651**





*Washington State  
Museum of Natural  
History and Culture*

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Seattle, WA 98195-3010  
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[burkemuseum.org](http://burkemuseum.org)

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