

Kellie Schweich
2008 Environmentalist Scholarship Essay

Imagine one small dot of yellow paint. Then step back, several dots of yellow and blue paint appear. Further back still and swirl of green begins to form finally taking the shape of a leaf. Georges Seurat developed many of his paintings this way; up close thousands of tiny spheres of paint would turn into an image when viewed further away. Everyday I make environmentally conscious choices that may at first seem rather insignificant but each action is a dot that helps develop the global environmental painting.

Each day I strive to make conscious decisions involving my environmental impact. Over time these actions have become second nature. For instance I use Tupperware to pack my lunches rather than plastic lunch bags. I have a reusable water bottle that I fill with tap water meaning I never have to buy bottle water. I wear eco-friendly makeup from Aveda which comes in environmentally friendly packaging. Little actions like turning off the lights and computer when they are not in use, using double sided printing, and bringing reusable bags to the grocery store where I buy organic milk and eggs. I also try to bike or walk whenever possible. In college I do not plan to have a car. I support companies that do make an effort to be environmental and are locally owned. The farmers market is a good example of my sustainable consumer choices.

Currently I attended the School of Environmental Studies located in Apple Valley Minnesota. My school is unique in that imbedded in our curriculum is a central focus on the relationship humans have with the environment. We look at large scale environmental problems like air pollution, water contamination, and climate change. With insightful discussion and informative readings I have learned more about the environment and my impact. The

knowledge I have gained at school has allowed me to understand how I impact the environment and has strengthened my values about environmental stewardship.

This fall I will be attending Prescott College in Arizona. It is a liberal arts college with an emphasis on the environment. I will be majoring in Environmental Science. With this degree I hope to further my environmental commitment. In the future I hope to make larger environmental strides by becoming an urban planner with an emphasis in sustainable design. There are many options to make our communities and houses greener and I hope to bring these options to the public. Designing communities so there is an emphasis on biking, walking, and public transportation. With energy coming from sustainable sources such as solar and wind.

I do not claim to be a pure environmentalist; I still pollute and occasionally forget to recycle a plastic bottle. My actions may seem futile but when I remind myself of the hundreds of other people adding their little dots to the picture I remain hopeful. When it comes to the environment the essential part is hope. I have hope and confidence in humanity that we will come together and solve the environmental problems that face us. I have hope that by doing my part for the environment I am making a small but important difference. If the actions we take each day to protect the environment are the dots in the painting, then hope is the color that makes the dots a picture.