

# Making Climate Connections

**Tamara Marcus receives 2019 Switzer Fellowship to make science accessible**

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PH.D. STUDENT TAMARA MARCUS HAS RECEIVED A PRESTIGIOUS SWITZER FELLOWSHIP.



TAMARA MARCUS RESEARCHING METHANE EMISSIONS FROM PERMAFROST IN NORTHERN SWEDEN. PHOTO BY RUTH VARNER.

Tamara Marcus, a graduate student in UNH's [Natural Resources and Earth System Sciences Ph.D. program](#), has received a 2019 Switzer Fellowship. Marcus studies methane emissions from permafrost thaw with Ruth Varner, professor of Earth sciences and director of the [Earth Systems Research Center](#) in the [Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space](#).

The [Switzer Fellowship Program](#) offers one-year fellowships to 20 graduate students in New England and California whose studies and career goals are directed toward environmental improvement and who demonstrate leadership in their fields. Marcus says the \$15,000 fellowship will support her efforts to make science more accessible, a goal she's already pursuing as an American Geophysical Union [Voices for Science](#) ambassador.

**“This fellowship allows me to explore how to better connect people with data in actionable ways to help increase the impact of scientific research.”**

“This fellowship allows me to explore how to better connect people with data in actionable ways to help increase the impact of scientific research,” Marcus says. “I think by doing this, we not only create more scientifically literate communities, we also improve the quality of our research by supporting more innovation and application of our

work.” The honor also connects fellows to a network of more than 650 Switzer Fellowship alumni.

In addition to researching the impact of warming on carbon emissions from Arctic Lakes, Marcus is exploring how indigenous communities understand and apply weather and climate data. She combines survey data and storytelling with indigenous Australians and Sámi communities of northern Sweden to record their observations of environmental change.

“I want to understand what indigenous communities already know about climate change through generational and observational knowledge and understand how scientists can better engage the communities in which they work to produce a more collaborative approach to research,” she says.

A former Fulbright-Nehru fellow with a B.S. from the University of Minnesota, Marcus’s commitment to science communication was born of the United States’ withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2017, the year she started pursuing her Ph.D. “I have tried to work to improve representation of groups typically not invited into conversations about science,” she says. “If we want to ‘do good science’, it is essential that we make sure our research is diverse, inclusive, and equitable.”

Marcus, who acknowledges that being a student of color at a predominately white institution has been challenging, credits Varner for helping her navigate both personal and academic struggles with compassion and patience. “I have been able to find a place within the UNH community by connecting with more faculty and students who recognize the need to work together to create a culture that is both welcoming and supportive of all students,” she says. “I see great potential for UNH and I hope to be a part of making our university a true beacon of inclusive education.”

- **WRITTEN BY:**

[Beth Potier](#) | Communications and Public Affairs | [beth.potier@unh.edu](mailto:beth.potier@unh.edu) | 2-1566

## GRADUATE SCHOOL



University of New Hampshire

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