

Environmental seminar speaker to explore variations of tree rings

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Andrew Burkata, research assistant professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, will host the next Environmental Studies Seminar at Alfred University with a discussion titled, "Using Variations in Tree Ring Chemistry (stable isotopes and elemental compositions) to Reconstruct Recent Environmental Change: Successes, Failures and On-going Projects." The lecture will take place on Friday, Oct. 2, at 12:20 p.m. in Roon Lecture Hall (room 247), the Science Center, on the Alfred University Campus. The program is open to the public free of charge. Burkata received a bachelor of science degree in chemistry at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada, where he found that he was much more interested in applying chemistry to environmental questions than in the study of chemistry itself. He worked briefly for Atmospheric Environmental Services (a division of Environment Canada) before returning to school to earn a master of science degree in environmental geochemistry from Trent University, Peterborough, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. Burkata completed his thesis work at Atomic Energy of Canada (AECL) in Chalk River, Ontario. At AECL, in addition to applying radioisotopes to environmental research, he was introduced to stable isotopes and subsequently then earned a Ph.D. in stable isotope geochemistry at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. His Ph.D. research focused on the application of tree ring chemistry to examine environmental change. The Environmental Studies Seminar series is held every Friday during the fall semester when Alfred University is in session. Sponsored by the Division of Environmental Studies within Alfred University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the series brings a range of speakers to the campus, including scientists, activists, and policy-makers, with the mission to better understand our environment and what we can do to better sustain our world.