Without talented, passionate environmental scientists, the future of our planet is academic.

The bright, passionate young scientists who feel called to environmental research and careers in academia as PhDs are critical for a sustainable future. These are the men and women who will forge new avenues of thought and action on behalf of our planet, and will inspire and educate the next generation of students to be faithful stewards of our environment.

The first step on their path to achievement: a doctoral (PhD) program.

At Duke University’s Nicholas School of the Environment, we train the finest of these young scientists. Our accomplished faculty members share their passion, commitment and spirit of inquiry to fuel students’ ambitions and provide the foundation and encouragement to enable them to reach ever higher.

Because we believe the future is in their hands, we invest tremendous resources to attract and train the next generation of scientists who will advance environmental science, thought, policy and education.

Providing this type of training is expensive. That’s where you come in.
PREPARING SCIENTISTS OF CONSEQUENCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The Nicholas School, through the Duke Graduate School, offers research-intensive doctoral degree (PhD) programs in Earth and Ocean Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Policy, and Marine Science and Conservation, and participates in University PhD programs in Ecology and in Environmental Policy and a certificate program in Integrated Toxicology. At any given time, more than 140 bright, passionate students are engaged in these programs, whether in the labs and classrooms on Duke’s Durham campus, at the Duke Marine Lab in Beaufort, or participating in field studies with our faculty at environmentally significant sites around the world.

The Nicholas School’s annual cost to fund a PhD position is more than $70,000 – a significant commitment for both the School and the student, especially considering the average candidate takes five to seven years to earn his or her doctorate. While students in the Graduate School-linked programs may be eligible for partial fellowships from the University, the Nicholas School currently has only one named fellowship available to help support a single student.

To make ends meet, most of our first-year PhD students must immediately work as teaching or research assistants – taking away from time required by their rigorous first-year courses. By contrast, at many other schools, first-year students have fellowships that enable them to concentrate primarily on their coursework at the outset.

To recruit the best and brightest doctoral candidates to our programs, the Nicholas School must offer competitive fellowships. We need your help so that we can provide a high level of fellowship support.

Conservation biologist Krithi Karanth PhD’08 (environmental science and policy) was awarded the prestigious 10,000th National Geographic grant to examine conflicts between people and India’s storied wildlife such as elephants and tigers. An adjunct assistant professor at the Nicholas School, as well as a Ramanujan fellow with the Indian government and executive director for India’s Centre for Wildlife Studies, Karanth is exploring what’s behind the dramatic declines and persistence of many of her homeland’s wildlife.

Rob Young PhD’95 (geology) is professor of geosciences at Western Carolina University. Nationally recognized as an expert on wetland ecosystems and coastal environments, Young directs WCU’s Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines and has shared his expertise on the best way to mitigate damage to coastal communities from the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. He co-authored a book on the threat of global sea-level rise with his Duke mentor, Professor Orrin Pilkey.

Dianne Pataki PhD’98 (ecology) is founding director of the Center for Environmental Biology at the University of California, Irvine. Pataki, who studies the interactions between urban ecosystems, pollution and climate, received the prestigious 2008 James B. Macelwane Medal from the American Geophysical Union for her leadership in the study of human-ecosystem interactions.

Help us train outstanding environmental scientists.

- For $50,000 per year (for three years), you can provide an annual fellowship with research support
- For $100,000, you can create a named graduate student research and fieldwork endowment
- For $250,000, you can create a named fellowship in a specific discipline
- For $500,000, you can endow a named fellowship program

For more information – or to contribute – contact Nicholas School of the Environment, Office of External Affairs, at (919) 613-8003 or visit nicholas.duke.edu/giving.