

I was born in Brownsville, Texas. My mother was sixteen and my biological father had many issues. They separated when I was very young. We lived with my grandparents. I grew up watching my mother work hard to remove us from our socioeconomic status as a single mom until she remarried. We eventually moved to Everett, Washington and my parents bought their first house. My father was always gone on deployment, and I had to help my mother raise my siblings sometimes alone. I learned to cook, clean, and take care of babies at a very young age. My mother eventually became a licensed insurance agent and became the president of her own insurance company. While growing up in Everett, Washington I experienced a lot of racism from teachers, the police, and from people in the community. My parents always loved and supported me during this period of my life. It is this love and support that helped me overcome this ignorance I experienced.

I have worked abroad as an E.S.L. teacher at an elementary school in Siheung, South Korea. While in South Korea I learned how to deliver lessons and teach. I also learned how to develop quizzes and exams with specific rubrics on how to administer these quizzes and exams.

I have also worked for Disney English in Tianjin, China. Disney English taught me how to operate and run a center. I gave demonstrations to potential students and their families about the Disney experience and methodology. I had been a car salesman in the past and I took pride in seeing how much revenue and students I could generate from giving these demonstrations. Within one year our center was almost at capacity with a little under 1,000 students. I was promoted and sent to an underperforming center. This is when I broke and held the sales record in all of China for a one-month period with just over 885,000 RMB in sales revenue. I was promoted and transferred to Shanghai, China. This is where I began my managerial training. This is where I

developed and learned about meeting Key Performing Indexes, and everything about running a center.

After my experience in Shanghai, I moved back to Tianjin and started my own school with my best friend Kjell Ring from Sweden. I developed the standard operating procedures for the center, the curriculum, the sales process, and developed all the job descriptions for the entire center using everything I had learned as the Academic Director. This is when I developed the aspirations to open a non-profit school in the United States. After establishing Key English, I wanted less of a workload and took up an opportunity to work at the Korean International School of Tianjin (K.I.S.T.) as an English teacher. At K.I.S.T. I developed a literacy program and in my second year I was given a promotion to become the Coordinator/Director for the elementary school. K.I.S.T. inspired me to get my master's degree in education.

I had the privilege of creating positive change in my professional leadership role as an educator at the Korean International School of Tianjin (K.I.S.T.). I did this by understanding that there was a need to establish a literacy program at the elementary school. I noticed the need to create and establish this literacy program because in my first semester there I was given the privilege to teach students that were considered lower level in their capacity to read, write, and comprehend. I soon realized that many of my students and the students of many other teachers had no phonological awareness and had no foundation in writing basic grammar structures or punctuation.

I started my literacy program by first holding training on phonological awareness in the kindergarten and the teachers there because many of our first graders lacked phonological awareness. I held training on various games and elements on phonological awareness so the teachers could feel confident on teaching phonics in fun and engaging ways.

I was then put in charge of the reading program by the Vice Principal for the entire elementary school. I then moved to establishing a reading program for the entire elementary school where students were encouraged to choose and read books that were appropriate for their reading level. I developed and printed reading charts for all grades. Every chart had a student's name on them and were posted in every classroom on the wall for the entire class to see. I then held a meeting instructing all the Foreign English teachers about how to execute and promote our reading program. Students had a Portfolio, and, in this Portfolio, there were reading sections where students would write a basic outline of what they had read, and their English Teachers would sign off on the books they read.

All the homeroom teachers were then informed to motivate the students to read every day and that there would be a friendly competition amongst all the grades in the elementary school to see what grade read the most books. The grade with the most books read would get to have a party but in reality, every class and grade would be rewarded with a party for reading more. At the end of the semester all the English Teachers would collect all their students Portfolios and we would count which students read the most books for each grade and they would be rewarded at the Academic Awards Assembly that was held at the end of every semester. The reading rates increased to be over 90% and by the time I left K.I.S.T. every child in every grade could read and write. The children learned to write because of my writing templates which were a form of scaffolding that the children in my classes used and when their writing improved these writing templates became a standard for English Teachers to use when the students wrote their Presentations every other month.

While attending Western Washington University I received my degree in American Cultural Studies. This degree gave me the privilege and perspective to learn about the struggles

different people in our society have been through and why they experienced these struggles. I want to help children in our society have as many possibilities as possible to be successful and enjoy doing what they love doing in an environment that supports and loves them. I believe that the program at Evergreen State College will help me to make this happen.

All of these experiences combined have made me become resilient and open minded about issues that deal with race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical abilities, and many other differences that we may have as human beings. I am an advocate and ally for underrepresented people in our society. I will bring nothing but love and support to the classroom and the community in the Evergreen State College master's in public administration program. Living and working in South Korea and China has benefitted my perspective because I have learned to bridge cultural differences, and differences in thought.