Tell us what brings you to public service and to the evergreen MPA program. Why do you want to pursue graduate study in public administration in general and at evergreen in particular?

Statement of Purpose

Currently I am an undergraduate student at The Evergreen State College on the verge of graduation. Arriving at this point has been a very challenging yet fulfilling journey in my pursuit of higher education. Studying at Evergreen has been a one-of-a-kind experience. The seminar-based learning style I've been a part of at the institution has been tremendously valuable in terms of creating communication between professors and fellow students. This approach to education provided me the opportunity to analyze our topics more critically as well as appreciate the different ideas and thoughts of my peers. Being a part of this type of collaborative learning environment enabled me to grow not only as a student but as a member of the community. Speaking to this, there is no surprise that The Evergreen State College would be my top choice when choosing an institution to pursue a graduate degree in public administration.

During my time at Evergreen, I studied and analyzed very complex multilayer issues regarding public policy and the various elements that are involved with decision making and ultimately the way we govern our society. My interest in this field grew exponentially as I researched issues during my recent course *Borders, Walls, and Refugees in the Age of Climate Crises*. I gained a profound understanding of the importance of policy. Whether we are aware or not,

policy affects every aspect of our lives, and it is of the utmost importance to implement policy that is effective in creating an environment that reflects an equitable and just society.

As a disabled veteran with over ten years of service I am no stranger to public service. During my time in the military, I've experienced first-hand the importance of effective leadership, organization, collaboration, and community outreach. I've held positions in a variety of different roles, from a Logistics Specialist to an Aviation Mechanic, to Navy Aircrew, and ultimately Squadron Leader. As I've progressed my way through the ranks, I've learned the importance of clear and precise communication, effective strategic planning and efficient resource management. I believe these skills provide the foundation for success in a graduate program in public administration.

Evergreen's Community Based Learning Program is allowing me to intern at the Tacoma Public Library's northwest room. Here will be hosting a variety of events including the Hilltop Story Fest in which we will be recording and documenting stories directly from members of historically underheard voices of the community. Events like this provide an opportunity to engage directly with the public and expand my experience working and interacting with my community.

Looking ahead, I believe pursuing a master's degree in public administration will be fundamental in my future endeavors. In the future I hope to explore policies related to the social welfare and healthcare of Veterans and their families. Being a member of this community myself, gives me a solid understanding of the challenges these members of our society face. I've

specifically chosen to pursue this program because I am highly motivated to continue to serve my community. Upon graduation, I'd like to pursue a career with the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to help and provide support to veterans transitioning from the military back to civilians and becoming happy, healthy, members of society. This transition is not an easy feat to complete, and I believe through my prior experience and the education that the graduate program at Evergreen will provide me, I will be given the tools and skills needed to be a positive liaison for veterans and provide representation and support to not only this sector of our society, but our collective community.