

Tesa Frevert

MPA Statement of Purpose

When I was young and I was asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, my answer was always, “The First Female President.” This answer always received a lot of chuckles and I never understood exactly why. I never knew for sure if it was because I’m a girl, or because the goal was just too lofty. All I wanted was to be a voice for the unheard, and maybe be heard myself, in the process. As often happens, those chuckles and dismissive comments ended up dashing that dream and leaving me feeling a little lost. By the time I graduated high school and headed to college, I truly had no idea what to do with myself. My hope was that a purpose would strike me while attending college and life would suddenly make sense.

My first major at University of Colorado was Architecture and Planning. I love art and drafting and hoped this would be a good fit. Sadly, after paying for my tuition and housing, I was unable to afford the necessary tools and supplies needed just for class. I quickly adjusted my schedule to avoid those classes and transitioned into taking more business focused courses. After failing to be inspired, I decided that maybe a change in environment was what I needed. I transferred to Colorado State University in hopes of a fresh start. After a year at CSU, I decided to take a year off school and accepted an internship working for a non-profit organization in Japan working with students of all ages as a sort of cultural ambassador. While I was in Japan, I emailed every department at CSU and changed my major to Speech Communication purely because I would be able to graduate with the least additional credits.

While working towards my degree, I unexpectedly really enjoyed my political rhetoric courses. Once again, those dreams of growing up and being able to use my voice began to surface. I began to formulate plans of attending law school and pursuing a career in speech writing. Once again, my hopes were put on hold due to financial constraints. I planned on working for a few years, just long enough to boost my bank account, and then charge on. But as often happens, life took a few turns that conflicted with my plans.

Fast forward 20 years...

One thing that I’ve always enjoyed is working with children. Working as a babysitter in my youth, my experiences in Japan, working with pediatric patients as a PTA, and most recently homeschooling my own children during the pandemic and substitute teaching at their school since, have all offered a different perspective on youth and education. As a parent, my most important job is to raise my children to be successful, productive, kind members of society. As any parent can attest, that isn’t the easiest task in this day and age. It can often be a very frustrating endeavor, especially when it feels as though the systems in place to help and support are broken or dysfunctional.

Just prior to the pandemic I joined a book club with several other mothers whose children attend the same school as mine. Our focus is on social justice and how we can raise our children, in a

colorless environment, to be anti-racists. We frequently attend school board meetings, not to cause a stir, but to understand how our schools function. If we understand how our schools function, then we can propose change. This is where my desire to obtain an MPA from Evergreen comes into play. I often feel myself listening at board meetings and reading the numerous policies and wondering when they are going to be anything more than words on paper. I want to see all those wonderful equity documents and policies actually put into action. I want to know how we're going to measure our successes or failures in implementing them. I want our school to learn and grow depending on those successes and failures.

This perceived inaction is what has prompted me to apply for a recently vacated school board position (we live in the Griffin School District). My desire is that I can be that voice demanding more than just rhetoric. I want to help put measurable meaning behind those policies and be in a position to see that those policies be enforced. I don't want to stop at just my local little school, nor do I want to only address equity. I recognize that I need to be appropriately educated to really make the differences I want to see. It is important to me that that education comes from an institution that is as equally focused on the need for social justice and values diversity as much as I do, and I believe Evergreen State College fits that bill.

I am looking forward to being in an environment learning and growing with other like-minded individuals, who are as equally vested in changing for the better our communities, state and potentially country, whether that is by writing the policies, or enforcing them. I am also looking forward to attending a college whose goal isn't entirely centered on churning out graduates. Evergreen's focus on growing the person is highly attractive and I can't think of a better place to help me achieve my new lofty goals.