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The Evergreen State College MPA

Statement of Purpose

It has taken me two and half years to apply for grad school, not because I am incapable of completing a master's degree but because it was not the right time for me. I believe this is the right time to pursue my master's degree. My journey has been far from smooth since the very beginning so, at some point I learned to embrace my situation by not rushing anything.

I moved to Washington State in late February 2010, the middle of the school year. After not attending school 3 years prior to moving, I jumped into school the first week I arrived in Tacoma, WA. I did not go into the grade I was supposed to because of the amount of time I spent out of school. When I moved here, I was 15, and was put in the 8th grade instead of going into high school. The more you struggle the more experience you gain, and I have overcome and seen a lot of different situations. Both being in Ghana and moving to the United States have their struggles and I've had to face all of them. Circumstances in life have shaped the type of person I am today. While events have taught me never to give up and keep fighting, it has also taught me the importance of help and support because without those I never would have made it this far.

Like many lost undergraduate students, I took a business program to begin my higher education; it was called Business for Good which was about business ethics. It focused on a foundation of skills essential for success in business and social entrepreneurship. In this class I had the opportunity to share my experiences with people I found helpful. I have always had a desire to make a difference and this desire gradually became a true reality for me last year when I was employed as an Educational Advisor with the TRiO Upward Bound program at The Evergreen State College. My entire educational experience has been built on that desire and given me skills to make a difference in other's lives.

As an Undergrad, I enrolled as a College Bound Scholar and got connected with the TRiO. Being part of TRiO, I got a chance to work with the Upward Bound program by serving as a student success coach for 5 years. I created and led a civic engagement Pericles project that I used to teach middle school students about engaging in their communities to help contribute rather than just being satisfied as takers. I also had a year of internship for the Thurston County Dispute Resolution Center to help teach both students and teachers about conflict resolution within middle and high schools.

I spent my last semester with the School for International Training in East Africa learning about Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Peacebuilding in both Rwanda and Uganda. I learned how colonization projects and decolonization struggles shaped genocidal tendencies in Rwanda and intra-state conflict in Uganda and the ways in which processes of genocide and intrastate conflict are influenced by a complex interaction of local and international dynamics. I also outlined social and political processes that influence the pursuit of sustainable peace and suggested measures for preventing the occurrence and recurrence of conflict. In doing this, I got an opportunity to expand on coursework related to Political and Social Science as well as other disciplines.

I have acquired and want to continue gaining relevant knowledge and skills that guide in Identifying and analyzing social and political issues that hinder the growth of communities and the families within those communities. My Bachelor of Art's degree has helped me start and develop a career in the line of my dream and vision with my current occupation as an Educational Advisor. With an MA degree, I plan to further develop my skills, weaknesses and strengths for my career. At a young age I learned of the struggles of my village in Ghana: living among the trash we create, limited clean water and the struggles of accessing restrooms from one day to the next. Many people who come from a background such as might tend to dream of not only making it out but also returning to support others, but not everyone is successful in

accomplishing this feat. I am among the lucky few who is able to realize this dream.

Ultimately, my goal and vision is to be able to serve underprivileged, underserved and underdeveloped communities. Thus, I am seeking an opportunity to further my education at Evergreen with the Master of Public Administration program. As an undergrad, I enjoyed studying at Evergreen and I think I will do well at Evergreen again.

Thank you,