

Alden Nagel

MPA Applicant

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Statement Of Purpose

My name is Alden Nagel, and I would be honored to be considered as a student of The Evergreen State College's Master's of Public Administration Program. I am applying as a current senior of the college's Bachelor's of Arts program in Media and Arts Studies, with prior experience working in volunteer positions for The Seattle International Film Festival, The Olympia Film Society, and Washington Conservation Action. My time as both a student and a volunteer with these organizations has given me a strong understanding of the importance of community engagement with the arts, professional communication, and public service. These understandings are coupled with a lifelong passion for creative and critical thinking, community service, and logistical problem-solving.

I first developed a love for studying media in 10th grade, when I developed a deep fascination for film, and its potential for being a medium that could inspire, humanize, and be a catalyst for social and societal change. From there, I spent as much time as possible learning about it through studying the history and culture of it, and going to my local libraries to check out as many films to watch as I could carry - often over 20 at a time. Through my fascination and obsession, I found a great sense of purpose in being able to share films with others, to discuss them, and to be a part of the larger film community around me. This has inspired me to make working within the world of film a lifelong pursuit, and I believe that doing so in an

administrative capacity would be the most meaningful way to turn my fascination into a career that serves others directly, both at the individual and community level. I can most clearly see myself doing this specifically by working for a theater or a film festival, which would allow me to do such directly impactful tasks as connecting artists with grants, ensuring a diversity of artists are given platforms so as to have a voice to represent their respective communities and ideals, and to help organizations I work with in the future to remain proactive in an ever-changing economy within the film world.

Through my time at The Evergreen State College, I have implemented my deep personal connection to film in my own life in a purposeful way. I have networked with other filmmakers and leaders in the local film community to better understand the roles that they perform, how they got to their positions, and what their work means to them. The people I have consulted with have included my own professors who have taught film studies, leaders of The Olympia Film Society, and those who work with The Pickford Cinema in Bellingham. This effort to network has only strengthened my desire to move into the film community at an administrative level, as through discussions with these local leaders I have learned of and have directly seen the importance of their work in how it interacts with their local communities in a meaningful way. This includes the importance of showing works by under-represented groups, intentionally working with those from a wide variety of backgrounds and opinions, and remaining consistently reliable and accountable to those around you.

While at The Evergreen State College, I formed and led an unofficial student group called The Evergreen Film Society, which allowed for students on campus to watch and discuss films from a broad variety of genres, eras, and countries to be shown. Two notable achievements from the group's existence have been being able to collaborate with The Cooper Point Journal on

a film screening of Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas, as well as our group directly collaborating with The Olympia Film Society to program and host their 2022 “All Freakin’ Night” event, a late-night showing of horror films. The work required to run the group gave me, and the others I brought in to lead the group, the opportunity to learn how to be better leaders through experience. I have found a lot of purpose in this work, and it has been one of the highlights of my time at The Evergreen State College. My experience leading this group has only strengthened my resolve to continue work in leadership roles in the film world in my life, both during and after my time in collegiate education.

I am very interested in pursuing a graduate education at The Evergreen State College as I am highly attracted to the values that the college’s Master’s of Public Administration program is founded upon, most notably its core beliefs of promoting effective communication, working collaboratively, and imagining new possibilities so as to promote the wellbeing of our communities and of the world at large. I believe that these are all core tenets of what allows an organization to work effectively, and must be understood by all involved so that everyone who is a part of an organization can not only strive for their best work with the organization, but also to serve the community around them in a faithful, purposeful manner.

To be able to study these ideals through the lens of history, sociology, politics, culture, and economics as it pertains to public administration would give me a fundamentally strong and well-rounded understanding of what is necessary to better serve the public in an understanding and compassionate manner. I believe that through studying public administration at the graduate level at The Evergreen State College I would be able to become a better leader, organizer, and collaborator.