

Sara Petruska

Personal Statement

07/07/2023

I have worked in the human services field since 2015. Over the last eight years I have sat in many different roles, all primarily direct services in one form or another. The beauty of direct services is you get to be hands on, witnessing the hard work and dedication that assists in changing people's lives. There is a different perspective though, you also watch first hand, the true deep rooted systemic issues people face. True sustainable change happens in policy and in programs implemented in the communities. That is the biggest lesson I have learned over my almost decade in the human services field. That is why I am changing gears in my career and want to get involved in a more administrative role. I hope to attend The Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus this fall to obtain my Master of Public Administration in Public & Nonprofit Administration. I want to help create long lasting change in our community. I want to build funding, bring awareness, and implement real change. I think I am a perfect fit for the MPA program, now, let me expand on why.

Personally, I feel I have three key assets that set me aside from others. My versatility, my knowledge, and my perspective. My versatility comes from the different roles I have taken on in the human services field. I have worked with people who experience substance use disorders, mental health, and homelessness. I have worked in housing, grants, and programming. I have worked with youth, elderly and the disabled. I have managed funding, tracked progress, and provided monthly, quarterly,

and annual reports on services. I've worked in state and county roles. I have worked with HUD, CEA, City of Issaquah, Issaquah School District, along with many other organizations offering funding and assistance to the community. My skills, abilities and work ethic have continued to thrive due to continuous challenges, the need for flexibility, thinking outside the box and always trying to improve the role I come into. It is no secret I have taken a long break from school and it will take some adjusting to get back into the swing of things especially at a Master Degree Level. However, I know I am beyond capable and when I really want to accomplish something I do.

I didn't just pick Evergreen specifically for my MPA program, I've waited for the Tacoma campus to be offering the MPA program. I am a Tacoma alumni and going to Evergreen Tacoma truly changed my life. I love the Tacoma campus's personality, the culture, the history and the purpose behind the campus. Evergreen strives for equity, social justice, empowerment, challenging each other, critical thinking and working together. I grew more in the two years I attended Evergreen than I have in any of my other years of schooling. It holds a very special place in my heart and I have so much respect for the campus and programs offered there.

I want to pursue graduate study in public administration because I want to go into a Human Services Manager role either with one of the cities or the county. I want to pursue a career in grant writing and program development. This is the degree that will help me build the proper foundation for just that. I hope to learn more about policy development, grant writing and budgeting. I know Evergreen is a great fit because I have reviewed the courses offered and the course syllabi offered on the website. All the key information and skills I am hoping to learn and develop are offered.

What draws me in most about Evergreen is the collaboration, critical thinking and advocacy. Evergreen is a big melting pot of people from all walks of life coming together with one common goal, to create change. There is so much power in the people. I miss lyceum from when I attended for my BA in 2017. I miss thinking outside the box the problem solves and deep discussion. Evergreen is not afraid to take a deep hard look at systemic issues and push for change. I appreciate that so much and it is another reason why attending Evergreen for my MPA is so important. I want to work in public administration because I want to see real change. Evergreen is the perfect fit and I cannot wait to have the opportunity to imagine new possibilities with the 2023 cohort of the MPA program.