

**Statement of Purpose**

Growing up at the poverty line on an island with more vacation homes than primary residences gave me a headstart developing a critical social justice lens. Without advanced education or vocabulary, as a child, I knew that a lot of things need to change from the top down for the average person to have a chance at an adequate quality of life. My critical eye was refined when I started South Seattle College after my first Ethnic Studies class in 2011, AME201Z: Diversity & Social Justice. From there I quickly conceptualized the similar and unique issues between marginalized communities in the United States and saw that it has never been the case, as the pledge of allegiance claims, that there was liberty or justice for all in the United States.

I attended as many workshops, diversity retreats, conferences, student leadership opportunities, and cultural events as I could to broaden my perspective and educate myself on social equity in general and racial equity specifically. There was one annual Diversity or Ethnic Studies class at South Seattle, so the day the class ended I applied to be the teaching assistant for the next year and I was hired. I attended the Student of Color Conference in 2011, 2012, and 2013. I also assisted my teacher and mentor in her annual Diversity retreat off campus.

Growing my understanding of the decades of history and context that guide public policy is fascinating and I believe it would be a rewarding and challenging career to pursue for the rest of my working life. There are many paths to advocating for equity and justice and I believe an MPA with a focus on public policy is the best way for me to do that. My path to apply to the Evergreen MPA program was dynamic. Many people recommended Evergreen's MPA as well as a teaching degree, a law degree, a social work degree, and others still, understanding I had no family financial support suggested

pursuing a master's, suggested I go directly into an interesting government job for stability and work experience and make a difference one person at a time.

My legislative internship experience showed me that there are many ways to make policy changes and after years of reading and listening to policy experts break down issues in fascination I am taking the opportunity to join their ranks. I chose Evergreen because the future we need to work for requires embracing all of the facets of the Evergreen philosophy. We need critical thinkers to collaborate creatively in pursuing the goals of equity and advocate for new and fair ways to change society for the benefit of everyone. I hope to be in the Fall 2023 cohort with other people as passionate about policy as I am.