

Description of Purpose in Pursuit of Public Policy Master's

A better life for our children requires drastic changes. I want the next generations to live without concern that the loss of a job could mean the loss of their home. I want them to have no worry that an accident or illness could mean financial ruin. I want them to find it easy to foster positive relationships with those around them. I want them to find access to services readily available without being forced to own a vehicle. I want them to see a world full of diverse species. I want them to have life and have it in abundance.

These hopes were always present in my heart, albeit to a lesser extent than they are today. The major difference is the time spent learning and pondering these topics. It takes a lot to turn a kid from a conservative family in a conservative community against the status quo. To go from agreeing with most Fox News talking points to being an avid leftist is a drastic change that catches my family off guard. They still don't know the extent of my change in beliefs.

Leaving home for college and moving to Washington with my wife created enough separation from my old community to give me the breathing room I needed to see for myself what the world is like. It is beautiful. It is dying. It is exploited.

Stumbling upon content creators such as 'Climate Town' or 'Not Just Bikes' gave me a stepping stone out of my naivety with their explanations of how broken our systems are and how they came to be. Seeing the efforts taken by oil companies to hide their own research on climate change opened the door to seeing how willing industries are to manipulate society to get a profit. Still, more time showed me that the root cause is deeper than a few, more likely many, disingenuous companies. 'Second Thought' dove deeper into systemic issues and connected issues of discrimination, poverty, and climate to the exploitation that our economic system encourages at its core.

Aidan Wasson

06/30/2023

Master's of Public Policy

The goal of having a profitable business sounds reasonable. Who wouldn't want to make a return on their investment? Appearances are deceiving at times and this is one of those times. You can't get value out of nothing. It requires work. The concept of profit is that you should gain more value than you gave. This means taking from someone else. Whether it be while someone is making a product or purchasing it, someone must receive less than they gave in order for someone else to receive more than they gave. Two plus two cannot become three plus two, it must become three plus one. Profit necessitates theft. A system enabling this theft is exploitation. This is our current system, also known as capitalism.

This needs to change so that future generations can have better lives. I didn't fully realize the urgency of this change, despite the newest climate report, until my wife and I were expecting a child. Then we were not. This brought to light the reality that my wife and I are responsible for the prospects of our children and that's happening sooner than later. If I want a better life for my kids, I can't bide my time and hope others solve these issues. Many a right wing capitalist has stated that future generations solve the problems of past generations. We don't have time for that. If those profiting off of exploitation won't take responsibility for their actions on their own, then the rest of us must step up and make them step down.

I'm here because I'm all in. I'm willing to take risks to get this done. Yet activism, despite its power, doesn't make a family budget work. Delving into a political career that helps to shape policy resolves this dilemma and provides another ally to the growing population attempting to address this issue. Rather than just running for a position with no experience or formal education, I want to make sure I'm prepared and be able to prove it to our community.