

Hello, My name is Zach Young, I was born and raised on Vashon Island Washington, a small community right next to Seattle yet physically cut off the rest of the world. What has driven me is to understand the world around me and to be understood in my actions. I have had to find my own way to get the support and fulfillment growing up, through sports, Boy scouts, going to an alternative school, I continue to find ways that enrich my life and give it meaning. Completing high school I decided taking the path of public and community service through AmeriCorps which had really woken me up to some of the issues happening just down the street. After two years in AmeriCorps and 2000 miles away, I missed my family and wanted to come back to Washington and figuring out that I wanted to remain in some sort of service work, I knew that I had to be somewhere that would support my needs, so I applied for Evergreen and came home. Most of my undergrad of my career I was working for student housing facilities, my service continued. Today after graduation I work for the college in facilities and joined the union Washington Federation of State Employees where I have trained to become a shop steward, participated in the collective bargaining negotiations and have lobbied the state legislature to fund our budgets. I will continue to support people and find fulfillment.

Following the path of public service coming from a place of compassion, I care about people and our world. There are many crises happening that are not being adequately addressed while what is causing the crisis to continue is receiving an overwhelming amount of resources. I . Already a significant portion of my professional life has been spent in public service up until this point, to me it is more fulfilling performing labor that is intended to enrich people's life while keeping them safe. "Helping other people helps yourself" was told to me by a project manager, I have kept that with me. There has been work that I have done that made me feel selfish and not achieving a sense that I was with my values, which is to make our lives better. I have gotten rewarded for doing some of the most thankless physical labor task but there is so much to do and the fact that these labor jobs are the lowest paid and high risk of injury it does not bring people in as much as needed, how does this change?

The Evergreen State College offers a hands on approach to learning, that is what drew me in the first place, ever since I stepped foot I knew I wanted to be here. I came here to have my needs supported and I succeed in my academics like I had not before. As time has progressed being here at the college I have seen many perspectives, been in various roles, I have felt achievement in work that I set myself in motion to do. Beyond the academic focus I also worked for the school as long as I have been here allowing me another angle to see how operations are functioning, I have seen the degrade and lack of commitment to having a unified mission to build the school back up, both academically as well as the investment in the facilities to support the students. There are many factors that have played into this decline and that is what is interesting to me is this line we have to walk in public higher education. I have worked on the back side of the school by maintaining the facilities giving me this since of removal because the function that I serve is to be able to house and create space for this institution. To not be "tied" to the academic side of this institution is very strange to me especially with part of our mission being collaboration. I have a bias from my perspective of being someone who has had to clean up the messes, I cannot forget the class status that the people who keep this hip afloat from a material perspective we are so few in numbers and not compensated. This is partly why I have begun organizing, trained and getting involved in our union, to support the workers. I also recognize that having been a student here I have a need to defend and improve to what Evergreen claims to be in all of its modes of production. People who have kept this places clean and safe have had to come to work every day and we are the least paid and have little influence

in the function that we serve on a daily basis. In addition to the labor shortage, our infrastructure was not properly updated when evergreen was at our peak in the mid 2000's.

What is attracting me to the MPA program with a focus on policy is my drive to improve my communication skills, conduct thorough level research, enrich my professional collaborative engagement, including all of what I do not know what to expect. My undergraduate degree is a BS with a significant attention of understanding the natural work ecological systems, which is important for me to understanding why, how , what we need to do to repair the world and ourselves. There were pieces of psychology as well, I enjoyed seminar in these classes the most, people were engaged and the best aspect to evergreen is the range of people who would come here so there were many perspectives discussing the same text, or other content. I am ready to return to the classroom.

There are times when I feel overwhelmed by the many challenges people face on a daily basis all over the world. We do not need to suffer and I have dedicated myself to be part of the change that gives people their dignity back. The work is for the long time span, I know that I might be able to see the unity of the world for the betterment of our lives and interconnected life of our planet. All I want is to be apart of that dream.