

I am excited to submit my application for admissions to The Evergreen State College of Public Administration because of the diverse selection of Public Administration courses offered by experienced professors. As a Test Drive Program student, I learned that The Evergreen State College of Public Administration faculty is consistent in pursuing new courses that encapsulate the current learning topics of Public Administration from the lens of policy, economy, and budgeting. I am a graduate of California State University of Los Angeles where I received a B.A in Political Science and a minor in Criminal Justice. Through personal and volunteer experience, I was motivated to earn a degree in those subjects because of my desire to tackle inequitable policies for disenfranchised communities. Through my professional experience in providing programs to eliminate structural barriers to education and offering resources, I feel that I am an excellent candidate for The Evergreen State College of Public Administration.

I am brought to the Master's of Program Administration to build the foundation needed for program administration and fulfill my passion of facilitating programs that encourage the betterment of underrepresented communities. I have gained invaluable experience by being involved in my community and in my career, that I feel the natural next step is to continue my education in program administration. The process for applying for admissions to Evergreen State College was a decision that was considered for over a year that began with me enrolling in the Test Drive Program. Through the Test Drive Program, I was able to take the Human Resource Management with Professor Lachezar Anguelov. This class gave me the insight on how courses at The Evergreen State College were modernized to have a direct correlation to the current climate in the field and how it relates to our individual professions. The course was discussion based on how us as future leaders in Public Administration can implement equitable policies in our workspace such as recruitment practices, performance reviews, management styles, and incentives. After completing the course, I was committed to applying for the Master of Public Administration program at Evergreen State College. To ensure the success in the program, I have a

support system that includes colleagues, friends, and family that will hold me accountable to program outcomes and offer guidance on navigating this new chapter in my education.

A quote that has inspired me and motivated me in public service is a quote by Audrey Hepburn, “To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.” The commitment to dedicate efforts to improving society is a testament of the belief that there will be a better tomorrow. This is the philosophy that has guided me throughout my years of public service and as a reminder of my professional vision. Throughout my undergraduate studies, I heavily pursued opportunities to serve others through volunteering. My long-term volunteer commitment was as a GED tutor with the Prison Education Program in California that allowed me to assist incarcerated women attain their GED. The purpose of the Prison Education Program is to reduce recidivism and helping women attain their education removed a barrier that they previously faced to attain employment. Underrepresented communities are facing inequitable access to healthcare, education, and employment which contributes to mass incarceration. Without having education, employment opportunities are diminished. Before their incarceration, the possibility of earning their GED was slim due to the costs, time, and opportunity which the Prison Education Program removed. Being able to participate in the facilitation of education attainment for the participants influenced me to further be involved and to pursue a degree in Political Science to understand policy impacts on underrepresented communities.

As a first-generation Mexican American who originates from underserved communities, I am adamant in being intentional on choosing paths that empower underrepresented populations. Since graduation, I have continued searching for volunteering opportunities to further develop my understanding on the local impact of policy decisions and to be a continuous asset to my community. I have had the privilege of volunteering with Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest (AIDNW), a nonprofit located in downtown Tacoma whose mission is to support immigrants in detention and when released through welcoming services focused on transitional support and connection to vital resources for resettlement.

Volunteering with AIDNW allowed me to listen to the stories of hardship that undocumented individuals have endured while in the U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center. I served as a translator, but most importantly I extended the compassion and humanity that the United States once claimed to offer to the undocumented. As a result of being involved with the Prison Education Program and AIDNW, I have learned the importance that policy decisions have for program administration on vulnerable communities.

Outside of volunteering, I have had the privilege on building professional experience in program administration through my position as a program coordinator for conditional scholarships for the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). The WSAC mission is a state agency that is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. Our vision is to both inspire and foster excellence in educational attainment. In my role as a program coordinator, I am responsible for multiple conditional scholarship programs that aim to reduce financial hardships for Washingtonians pursuing pathways into high demand fields, such as education, healthcare, and the National Guard. In this position, I have honed my skills in process improvement, evaluation, budget, and data management. Additionally, my role has gave me a foundational experience in policy development and stakeholder engagement, both which are key in program administration.

I have recently stepped into my new position as a Program Manager for Behavioral Health Conditional Scholarships that will encourage behavioral health professionals to practice in underserved areas such as urban underserved and rural communities in exchange for financial assistance. Washington is suffering a severe lack of behavioral health professionals, and the most impacted communities are urban underserved and rural communities with limited resources.

My long-term goal in public service is to lead, administer, and advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of underrepresented communities. I plan on delivering on my goal by pursuing a Master's

in Public Administration and furthering my career at the WSAC. If given the opportunity to enroll, I am confident that I possess the capability, drive, and enthusiasm to thrive in this program. I am confident that the Master of Public Administration program will equip me with all professional skills that I need to support a career in public service.