

Katrina Twiddy

Master of Public Administration

Statement of Purpose

I have always been driven to serve my community. Over the years, I have considered many avenues I could take to make a difference. During my time employed by the Skokomish Tribal Education Department, I loved to help students reach their academic goals and overcome their personal barriers. I especially valued the key point of my role, which was student advocacy. This was a crucial link between two parties - the educational institutions I worked in and the families I worked for. I had students and parents that struggled to understand in which ways they were not meeting expectations and teachers that worked with so many students that they were struggling to reach every single student in a meaningful way.

In 2020, I filled a vacancy on the Skokomish Tribe's Fireworks Committee. This role is very important to me because I come from a line of Fireworks Entrepreneurs, and I've never missed a business season. This regulatory committee has expanded my knowledge of Tribal Sovereignty, codes and ordinances, policy development and implementation. This committee meets six to eight times per year to discuss new policy recommendations for the Tribal Council.

December 2022, I began working for the State of Washington's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) under the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). This was a major transition because prior to this, I had primarily worked for the Skokomish Tribe. This agency has shifted my focus from the small reservation community that I'm rooted in, to the statewide community that needs just as much attention. I have found interest in social justice, workforce

development, affordable housing, quality education for all, the need for greater accessibility in accessing public assistance and other resources, and I'm especially interested in Washing State's Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan. I believe that a graduate degree in Public Administration would give me the tools and credibility necessary to participate at a greater capacity in updating policies and procedures to reflect modern values.

In my work at DVR, I facilitate interactions between both internal and external stakeholders. Because I value showing up to work as my full self, I often find myself pulling from my lived experiences during these interactions. In my division, I am part of the 1% of employees that identify as tribal affiliated. I deeply value providing equitable access to resources for all and yearn to foster an environment of inclusion and belonging. The ability to translate my experience into something that creates a more mutual understanding between two or more parties fuels a great desire to become more involved in Government-to-Government Relations. This is how I imagine myself serving the community in an impactful way.

Most recently, I have taken a deep dive into the Housing Crisis. As a mother that has struggled for years to provide safe, secure, and adequate housing for my family, I am very enthusiastic about doing my part to bring productive change to my community. Currently, I am the Chairperson for the Skokomish Housing Committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide advice to the Tribal Council on issues involving housing including policy, Tribal law and regulation and administrative processes. As I learn more about policy development and implementation, I can see the ways in which real changes in society work. While I've touched on the basics of policy development and implementation while serving on these Civil Committees, I am eager to expand this knowledge. Policy is a powerful tool.

I want to pursue a graduate study in public administration so that I can develop my leadership and management skills. I want to learn what it takes to run an agency in both the public and tribal sectors. I believe that if I can secure this graduate degree from Evergreen, I would become more qualified for management level positions within the State and Tribal Governments. I would love to spend my career in public and tribal administration, doing my part to make changes from the top down. I want to learn more about policy analysis and the ways in which I can apply this to the dire needs of the community like housing, education, and workforce development. To do this, I will need to enhance my research, data collection, and analysis skillset. I enjoyed research during my undergraduate years, and I'd like to learn more about how this can be applied to professional work.

Why Evergreen in particular? I completed my undergraduate study here and had the most amazing experience while doing so. Evergreen's values align closely with my personal values. While the entirety of Evergreen's Mission and Philosophy draw me to the program, a few elements really tug at my heart strings. I have always felt called upon to advocate powerfully and loudly on behalf of others. It would be an honor to elevate the voices of those who have gone unheard in the past.

Another aspect of Evergreen's MPA mission that draws me to this program is the value in fairness and equity. In my current profession, I work with individuals of all backgrounds and abilities. I have witnessed the impact that equity has in leveling the playing field of opportunity. I'm dedicated to creating more fair and just systems.

One of the main pulls for this MPA program is the opportunity to specialize in the Tribal Governance cohort. I appreciate that this program is very locally sourced and rooted in culture. I expect that I will learn much from this program and I would be very excited to be a part of this learning community so that I can invest my knowledge into the wider community.