

To whom it may concern;

My name is Cassidy Mendoza. In December of 2021, I completed my B.S. in Geography and minor in Global Studies at Arizona State University. Since the completion of my undergraduate degree, I have spent the past nine months traveling as much as I can to explore new parts of the world, with the hope that I will be stationary over the next few years with Evergreen State College as I pursue a Masters of Environmental Studies. In the past year, I have visited six different countries, and recognized that my education is not complete.

As I explore new parts of the world, I constantly find myself unable to concentrate on much else than the scenery that surrounds me. I immerse myself in a new culture, experience new cuisine, surround myself with new ecosystems and new geological settings, and I continue to crave more knowledge about the Earth.

During the summer of 2019, I had the pleasure of interning with the Chugach National Forest in Girdwood, Alaska. While interning as a forest ranger, I gained a lot of knowledge specific to the Pacific Northwest. I was able to research and develop my own interpretive programs to present to tourists and guests. The freedom to research any topic specific to the area was a great liberty. Some of my favorite programs included the ice age animals of Alaska, the medicinal uses of different plants by the Chugach people, and sea otters. I still carry many of the fun facts that I learned for campers in my brain, and love offering this knowledge to curious individuals. Did you know that sea otters have up to one billion hair follicles on their bodies?

This desire to conduct research continued to build through the winter of 2019-2020, when I was able to intern with a company called Global Treks and Adventures. This internship brought me out to Reykjavik, Iceland for one week. During my time in Iceland, I conducted research regarding the production and use of geothermal energy in the Greater Reykjavik Area. After returning home, I completed a summary of my research to act as a chapter in a travel magazine.

Very recently, I have relocated my life to Seattle, and would love to continue learning about the biodiversity that exists in the Pacific Northwest. The ecosystems that surround me are continuously dropping my jaw as I stare out in awe. I had originally heard about The Evergreen State College from a podcast featuring Dr. Michael Beug, and immediately gained much appreciation for your unique coursework specific to your

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setting. After speaking with other alumni, I believe that Evergreen State College would be the perfect setting for me.

I have a great appreciation for the outdoors, and the experience I have gained through my internships have led me to believe that my ideal career would allow me to share my appreciation for the environment. My goal following a masters program would be to continue on through a Ph.D, and pursue a career in education as a professor. I know how important the passion of an educator can be in a student's life, and I want to fill that role for future generations. Along the way, I know the excitement that research provides for my life, and I would love to join research teams along the way to fully immerse myself in the setting of the Pacific Northwest.

As a student who completed my undergraduate degree online, I am eager to get back into the classroom setting. The ability to attend a university so focused on the environment seems the most ideal to me as I pursue a Masters of Environmental Studies. I would love the ability to continue building off of my education and experiences as I immerse myself in the biodiversity of the ecosystems around me. Dr. Beug's words of praise also make me feel eager to attend Evergreen State College in the hopes that I will feel as proud as he does about my university.

Sincerely,

Cassidy Mendoza