

## WRITING/PERSONAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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I have experienced a wide selection of educational methods. I went to elementary school in a private school, then was homeschooled from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade, then went to a public high school while participating in the Cambridge program, which is a little like a school within a school. Participating students take the same four core classes together throughout high school, rather than just choosing whatever they think they need to meet the diploma requirements, and at the end of the year they take the AP and IGCSE exams for the subjects. Following this, I went to Bellevue Community College for two years to earn an Associates in Arts and Science before transferring to The Evergreen State College for my Bachelors in Science. I hope to continue at Evergreen for my Masters, due to my experience with it and its reputation for a good MES program.

I have always known I wanted to pursue a career in the sciences, though my exact focus has varied over the years. First, I wanted to be a geologist, because it seemed interesting, and I liked collecting rocks and guessing their composition. Then, after an earth sciences class I took while I was homeschooled most of my questions were answered and I briefly wanted to be a physicist, until I had a physics class as part of the Cambridge program in high school and my teacher killed my enthusiasm for the subject. However, I had been picking up a growing investment in environmental justice and greatly enjoyed my high school biology course and realized that there was a path that combined these things. When I graduated from high school in 2021, I was mostly set on environmental science as the subject I wanted to major in, with a possible biology minor, but my decision was not fully cemented until I took an Introduction to Environmental Science 101 course at Bellevue. I loved learning about how everything fit together, how complicated and amazing the world was, the delicate balance and combination of a billion interacting pieces that combine to produce life and the nature that surrounds us, that we depend on. I learned about the Gaia hypothesis, about how the entire biosphere is one massive system where everything has an impact and wanted to understand more about how things fit together to make up the whole. We don't really understand how the systems that make up the environment and world work and fit together, not fully, and I want to help expand that understanding.

While I was undergoing my academic journey, I was also diving into social and environmental justice. Climate change is a massive, ongoing problem, and it horrifies me that humans know the consequences of continuing to destroy ecosystems, rely on fossil fuels, and just keep going. I attended marches, followed the news, and even participated in the Fridays for the Future

protest during high school, where I took advantage of the fact that my academically focused classes on Fridays were before lunch to participate and leave school early to attend a protest, finding a compromise between doing the protest and keeping up with my schooling. A crucial part of solving any problem is understanding it, and a graduate degree in environmental science means I can help with this.

While at Evergreen, I chose classes that would help me in this goal while as an undergraduate student. I took Integrated Natural Science (General Chemistry, Biology, Pre-Calculus, and Statistics) for the full fall to spring quarters in my first year to serve as a foundation and greatly enjoyed both the content and structure. Some of the early topics were things I had already learned about, but we went more in-depth on everything, and I enjoyed doing labs and learning together with other students. The Evergreen State College has a focus on working together on classwork and in labs that I appreciate and find very helpful, while still having individual work and evaluations. I liked the campus culture and found support in both my academic and personal life. The QUASR and writing center are valuable resources and there is usually someone available to help. In the past, I have struggled with utilizing tutoring services, but it is fairly straightforward here. This year, I am taking Science of Carbon from the Forest to the Globe, which has a forest ecology section, a biochemistry section, and an organic chemistry section, and while I have been greatly enjoying the forest ecology part, organic chemistry is something of a struggle. However, I am choosing to persist and push through, because I know this will probably come up later and want to get a background in it, rather than take the easy route and give up.

I have chosen to pursue a Masters in Environmental Science because it fascinates me and I think this is something needed to make a difference in the world. I love learning and am amazed at how everything on Earth comes together to form something capable of sustaining this sheer variety of life. Environmental science is an interdisciplinary field that covers a lot of things and is increasingly relevant as climate change sends ripple effects across the globe. I want to focus on ecology and how living things interact with each other and their environment to form a whole, and how human activity impacts and plays a role in this, which will allow me to satisfy my curiosity, go into a field I have interest in, and help with the climate crisis.