

Statement of Purpose

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Scientists, academics and innovators around the world constantly make discoveries and reach conclusions that could change our world for the better. Their experiments and research projects often dazzle their peers, whose similar backgrounds and education allow them to appreciate nuances shrouded in jargon and technical terminology. But how do they convey the importance of their findings to other audiences, like the board of a local nonprofit organization, or a group of state legislators? How do decision-makers adapt what they've learned into well-informed policies, plans and actions?

As a writer with a strong background in natural and social sciences, I hope to act as a bridge between those engaged in highly technical scientific work and broader audiences. I began my undergraduate education with a focus in communications and fine art before shifting to pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies, and spent many years working as a freelance environmental writer in between. I have written extensively about topics like climate change, renewable energy, conservation, sustainable design and natural resource management. Ranging from pop science articles to corporate sustainability reports, this work often involves studying scientific journal articles, assessing sources for legitimacy, and interviewing subject matter experts. It also requires understanding the needs of the target audience, and what can be gained from sharing the work.

My undergraduate studies in marine bioresources, fungi, botany, Indigenous studies and science writing have enhanced my understanding of these topics. I have also gained experience with laboratory techniques, field work, interpretation of scientific data, plant identification and other applied skills. In pursuing a Master of Environmental Studies degree at The Evergreen State College, I hope to continue developing my scientific knowledge, skills and experience while expanding my focus to areas like environmental policy, regulation, management and planning. Through coursework, internships and my thesis project, I aim to strengthen my ability to analyze complex environmental data, deepen my comprehension of legal and regulatory topics, enhance my technical proficiency and learn how to develop strategies for implementing and monitoring policies.

Just as importantly, I want to gain a deep understanding of the intricate relationships between the environment of our South Puget Sound region and the communities that live here, including Indigenous peoples. I firmly believe in the Indigenous concept of humans in kinship with all other elements of the natural world, and the innate respect and reciprocity of that perspective. Promoting this view of humans deeply intertwined with our environment, and all the life it contains, allows us all to appreciate both the positive effects and the consequences of our actions. To transform scientific research and discoveries into meaningful solutions, we must thoughtfully integrate human experiences, social dynamics, and community perspectives into our strategic planning.

Ultimately, my greatest career goal is to participate in innovative collaborative solutions that promote sustainable coexistence and environmental stewardship. This could manifest in any number of ways — I imagine possibilities like working on public education and outreach campaigns; producing communications about proposed legislation; promoting sustainable community initiatives; or planning ecosystem protection projects. I am confident that the interdisciplinary nature of Evergreen's curriculum and its focus on real-world experience will give me a solid foundation of knowledge and a high degree of flexibility as I explore my options.