

MPA Financial Assistance

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To the MPA FA Selection Committee,

In the winter of 2007, I graduated from the Evergreen State College with a Bachelor of the Arts degree with an emphasis in Political Science, Economics, and U.S. History. Since graduation I have worked in the field of public policy in a variety of capacities. The programs that I took at Evergreen, including Political Economy and Social Change, sparked an interest in the political process that I plan to continue to explore.

I am applying for the Evergreen Alumni Association Graduate Award, the Graduate Endowed Fellowship Award, and the Soule Family Fellowship Award. My previous experience, and current position and goals, demonstrate a commitment to continuing my intellectual and professional growth in public policy.

The first professional position that I held after graduation was a temporary position at the Washington State House of Representatives, in the Office of Program Research, as the 2008 session legislative assistant to the Judiciary Committee. The Office of Program Research is a non-partisan office that provides information to assist House members and committees to make informed judgments about policy issues facing the state. In this capacity I helped to organize committee hearings, ran the hearing room equipment, took meeting notes, and also acted as the liaison between the rest of the committee staff,

members, constituents, lobbyists, and the media. Working very closely with research staff and council increased my interest in public policy and the political process.

After my position ended at the Washington State Legislature, I went to work at the Texas Legislature. I was a bill analyst for the Texas Legislative Council for the 2009 legislative session. I would not have been able to pick up my life and move to Austin, Texas if it had not have been for my time at Evergreen. Evergreen taught me to open up and to be brave. Evergreen pushed me outside of my comfort zone and helped me to grow as an individual and to develop into a driven member of society. I learned a great deal about public policy at the Texas Legislature. The Legislative Council is also non-partisan and provided support to the House of Representatives by writing analyses of every bill introduced during session. My job was to write the first draft of the analyses for my assigned subject areas, which included natural resources, environmental, elections, health and human services, and energy resources. This position pushed my abilities of critical thinking. It also helped to solidify my goal to work as a research analyst in public policy. I believe that a Master of the Public Administration degree from Evergreen would help to achieve this goal.

I have returned to the Olympia area to return to work at the Office of Program Research as a regular, full-time legislative assistant to the Judiciary committee, with the goal of returning to Evergreen to study Public Policy and earn my master's degree so that I can work as a research analyst in the future.

After working in public policy for two legislative sessions in Washington State and one session in Texas, I am ready to return to school. I want accomplish more in my professional career and I believe that a Master in Public Administration with a concentration in public policy from Evergreen is the best way to accomplish this. I believe that Evergreen is the best place for me to get prepared for my future career in public policy research and analysis. I also believe that I have a lot to offer the Evergreen environment, with both my experience at Evergreen and my years of experience in the field of public policy. At Evergreen, I plan to further explore the fields of health policy and environmental policy, among others, to decide which field I ultimately want to work in. After earning my master's degree I want to pursue a career in public policy that will help the lives of the people in our state.

Thank you for your consideration for financial assistance,

Tara J. Weaver