

Audrey M. Holien
2440 E Tudor #1008
Anchorage, AK 99507

July 29, 2011

Lee Lyttle
MPA Director
The Evergreen State College
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW
Olympia, WA 98505

Dear Mr. Lyttle:

I am writing to request re-admission to the MPA Tribal Concentration program at The Evergreen State College. I was admitted to the program at TESC Fall 2011 and attended the initial classes until the last drop date. Unfortunately I withdrew from the program at that time. It was a difficult decision I made based upon extenuating circumstances.

In the spring of 2010 my husband of 13 years had filed for divorce and July 2011 our home of 5 years went into foreclosure. I was reluctant to commit to the course work of the MPA program due to these significant life changes. In addition, I found my search for employment opportunities in the Olympia area abysmal and was unsuccessful at finding a position that would provide a living wage as I adjusted to being single.

In early December 2010 I accepted a position with Southcentral Foundation; Alaska's largest non-profit organization with 65 programs and 1,400 employees. I worked with a small team to establish a new SAMSHA funded program, Access To Recovery. As the Program Coordinator I was instrumental in implementing the processes that define the program's infrastructure and systems, creating/refining both paper and electronic tools that meet the grant mandates while incorporating the cultural sensitivities of the Alaskan Native peoples served by the program.

Why am I interested in the arduous journey back to TESC and seeking re-admission?

My motivation is my desire to affect the direction of the Alaska Native communities, to better understand the authority of Tribal Councils and strengthen Tribal Governance in Alaskan villages. Alaskan Natives have the highest alcohol abuse rates and the highest suicide rates in the United States. The findings of the Natives Commission reported a basic cause of crisis: "The enormous proliferation of non-Native laws and money of the preceding 30 years had produced a generation of people dependent on public services, subsidies and external control, a self-destructive culture of powerlessness." underlying everything else – the drinking, the suicides, the violent crime and incarceration, the educational deficits, the economic stagnation, the psychological depression, the breakdown of Village control.

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In the principal findings of the Alaska Commission on Rural Governance and Empowerment of 2009 - the closing quote read "*Only as Alaska Natives reassume power and responsibility for themselves and their communities will their suffering diminish and the lives of rural people improve.*" Alaska has over 200 Tribal communities with varying degrees of self-governance, many of the tribes do not have the human resources to call upon. The dependancy on public services has thwarted their self-determination leading to a breakdown of control within their communities as reported by the Natives Commission.

On this path to reassuming power and responsibility I know that I need to be the change I wish to see. TESC is the only learning institution that provides the educational opportunity that directly addresses Tribal Governance. Because the MPA "Tribal Concentration reflects the diversity of issues addressed by the Tribes, including: health, housing, education, youth, welfare, land use, law enforcement, human resources, transportation, fiscal policy and economic development", I have hope that the knowledge gained from the MPA Tribal Governance program will provide a framework for me as I continue to participate in the process of achieving wellness in the Alaska Native community.

Again, I am seeking re-admission to the MPA program at The Evergreen State College and appreciate the uniqueness of the the Tribal Governance concentration in addition to the learning models that are distinctive to Evergreen.

Thank you for reading my petition for re-admission and I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Audrey M. Holien".

Audrey M. Holien

Aleut, Shareholder Ouzinkie Native Corporation, KONIAG Regional Corporation