



May 27, 2021

The Honorable G. Helen Whitener, Justice  
Washington State Supreme Court  
415 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Justice Whitener,

It is my honor to inform you that the faculty of The Evergreen State College's Master of Public Administration program have selected you as our **2021 Public Official of the Year**. We make this award annually to a state, local, tribal, or nonprofit leader in Washington whose record of public service exemplifies our program's motto, "Be the Change." From your service on the board of the International Association of LGBT Judges and as chair of the Washington State Superior Court Judge's Association's Equity and Fairness Committee to your vocal advocacy for LGBT rights and justice in Trinidad and Tobago, your legal and judicial career centers on a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion that is a model for other judges and public service professionals.

In addition to your impressive record of public service and advocacy, your professional achievements and your public message inspire and empower a new generation of public leaders. From your private practice to the Tacoma Municipal Court, Pierce County Superior Court, and now the Washington State Supreme Court, your message of "overcoming societal codes" and claiming one's identity illustrate a path to public service that includes those who have historically been under-represented as leaders in our state and communities. Your message is also a powerful call to action for us to do better at supporting a public and nonprofit sector that embraces our diversity. In bringing forth this call, you have helped to assure that Washington's future leaders will be more representative of the public they serve.

We are very much looking forward to recognizing you at our Master of Public Administration Hooding Ceremony on June 11<sup>th</sup>. This ceremony is especially meaningful to us this year as students from our program's first cohort at Evergreen's Tacoma campus graduate. We are extremely pleased that as someone who has had a particularly significant impact on Tacoma and Pierce County, we can honor you at this milestone ceremony.

Sincerely,

Michael Crow, PhD  
Master of Public Administration Program Director

Master of Public Administration

The Evergreen State College | 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW | Olympia, Washington 98505 | [evergreen.edu/mpa](https://evergreen.edu/mpa)