

Statement of Purpose:

In 750 words or less, address

- *the factors that have encouraged you to seek an education from Penn GSE. You may also wish to address*
- *your background,*
- *significant personal and professional experiences related to your program of study*
- *important aspects of your academic record, and*
- *your professional goals upon completion of your desired program.*

Education, Culture, and Society Master's program, University of Pennsylvania
LH

I am eager to join the Education, Culture, and Society (ECS) cohort with the Community Action and Social Change Concentration to enhance my research on educational inequities among global Indigenous communities. I have initiated cultural curricula with Native communities in the U.S. and Taiwan for five years, cultivated a vision to address excessive school dropout rates and youth suicides, and implemented steps to strengthen cultural identity through global story-telling with measurable success. ECS' highlights on improving education in socio-cultural contexts complement my ambition to utilize educational reforms to mitigate Indigenous health disparities, confront historical trauma, and promote appreciation of minority cultures worldwide.

As a Taiwanese Fulbright Scholar teaching Chinese while incorporating Indigenous cultures at Michigan State University during the pandemic, I launched a digital forum to interconnect 40 Native American and Indigenous Taiwanese communities for cultural exchanges. Through guiding youth to interview their Elders and gather oral histories, I have helped over 30 children on reservations gain self-confidence and eliminate suicidal thoughts from racial discrimination. Through digital forums I created intertribal partnerships between Navajo children who sent traditional stories to Taiwan Truku peers and Truku children mailed back Christmas cards, forming a sense of integrated global community.

Throughout the summer of 2021, I visited 25 Native American reservations across 10 states. I experienced inadequate housing without running water or plumbing, non-existent grocery stores and healthy food, and reports of widespread youth suicide, drug addictions, and skepticism for the value of education. This drove me to target educational inequities along with historical trauma, socioeconomic challenges, and tribal sovereignty. Consequently, I visited five tribal schools, spent hundreds of hours in conversations with 50+ Indigenous educators, partnered with seven Native youth empowerment programs, and united my goal with ECS to support tribes worldwide to facilitate curricula incorporating distinct traditional belief systems and diverse historical backgrounds to meet the spiritual, psychological, and physical needs of each individual.

My mission to enrich Indigenous education was fostered when I organized cultural curricula for international scholars at National Taiwan University from 2017 to 2020. I initiated 82 field trips in 14 mountainous tribes, inspired international scholars to appreciate global minority cultures, and motivated tribal families to relearn their traditions, strengthening their cultural identity. I conducted additional research with 10 tribes, analyzed educational challenges and possible solutions, and helped a tribe start their cultural tourism business featuring educational activities.

Moreover, I have worked with non-profit organizations *Teach for America* and *Global Link Up for Education* to send Native American educators to teach traditions to Taiwanese tribes. I have also collaborated with the Taiwanese Ministry of Education to incorporate transnational Indigenous storytelling into K-12 curricula. I will contribute my accumulated insights to the ECS cohort with the hope that these endeavors will be expanded to more countries through the ECS network.

My education through community engagement, racial perspective, and anthropological considerations lays a foundation for the ECS program. My two-year Fulbright training included 10+ hours/week in global cultural pedagogies, community engagement for social impacts, ethnic and gender discrimination, and psycholinguistics. To understand historical and political influence on Native American education, I completed seven anthropology courses. From 2017 to 2020, while at National Taiwan University, I fulfilled academic trainings 8+ hours/week in foreign language teaching, curriculum development emphasizing cultural diversity, and psychology of learning, equipping me to teach in the context of community regeneration through a global lens. My undergraduate foreign languages studies enhanced my cultural competence to interpret distinctive cultures into applied teaching. My study abroad experiences at the *Language, Culture, and Education in a Globalized World* program at University of Mannheim, Germany, and other education programs in Canada and China compelled me to explore the complex dynamics among education, culture, and society.

The next step of my career is to pursue University of Pennsylvania's Ph.D. Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Development to comprehensively address Indigenous historical trauma through social justice education. Simultaneously, I will work with UPenn's Native American Studies program to expand digital storytelling to more Nations, creating an archive with the ECS ethnographic projects to preserve Indigenous cultures. Subsequently, I will facilitate more Indigenous educators and students to share traditions with tribal schools overseas, adding in leadership skills for tribal affairs. Ultimately, I will establish the United Indigenous Nations, a worldwide consortium for collaboration on youth empowerment and immersion education. With the ECS multidisciplinary scholarship, I dedicate myself to enhancing education that connects Indigenous youth with their Elders, lands, themselves, and the world, as well as translating Indigenous stories of resilience into educational resources for global citizens.