

Diversity Statement

My journey as in STEM is marked by
perseverance, adversity, and success, and I consider it my responsibility and honor to be an advocate for diversity and inclusivity.
This faculty application is a testament to the active community efforts made throughout my education
to foster my passion for STEM. In high school, I participated in the
an intensive summer program designed to set students on the path to a career in biomedical research
or healthcare. A director declared to me, "One day, you will look at yourself in the mirror, and you will call
yourself a Doctor." I am astonished by the effect those words still have on me today for they carried me
through challenging times during my Ph.D. studies. I continued to participate in diversity promoting initiatives
any chance I had. Summers were spent researching at New Mexico State University, funded through the
Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement. The supported
research opportunities during my undergrad at Colorado State University (CSU). All of these engagements
provided me not only with laboratory experience and career preparation but also encouragement and
community support.
Throughout college and grad school I was active in Native organizations and communities. The Native
American Cultural Center at CSU was
I was a member, then President of the American Indian Science and Engineering
Society, organizing events for professional development and socials to promote fellowship amongst
Native STEM students. I also was a member of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and
Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). This led me to the SACNAS National Conference where I was
recruited by the Sackler Institute at New York University to pursue a Ph.D. In turn, I represented NYU, as a
grad student to recruit students at that same annual conference. At NYU, I found community through the
Native American Club where I was a member and also a President. Again, the support and wisdom gleaned
from my Elders and provided a strong foundation for my well-being and success
through my Ph.D. studies.
And now I find myself in Basel, Switzerland where I have continued to grow professionally and
personally. Far away from any semblance of my home or my communities, I have learned to
cultivate community through a multicultural and global lens. I am incredibly grateful to have had the



opportunity to experience the benefits and challenges of living as a foreign worker. Being far away from home is not just missing homemade but sometimes it is. It is nuanced. Despite being in an international academic environment while I lived in the US, I did not fully appreciate what it is like to live as a foreigner – now I do. With gratitude from these enriching experiences here in Switzerland, I am ready to come back to the US.

Wisdom, encouragement, and critique collected from many perspectives, cultures, and advisors had provided me with some tools to lift barriers that restrict the participation of underrepresented members in our academic communities. With these tools, I aim to do the following to serve the diverse students at UC-Berkeley:

- Align and share my vision to promote diversity and inclusion with the pioneering work
 established by the Division of Equity and Inclusion. This includes learning more about the
 STEM E&I and Chicanx Latinx Taskforce initiatives as well as the membership to the National
 Center for Faculty Development and Diversity.
- Establish healthy academic relationships with students and mentees to build confidence and trust.
- Connect with the SACNAS and AISES chapters on the UC-Berkeley campus and offer undergraduate research opportunities in my lab.
- Share my challenges and successes to students and mentees so they may relate and learn.
- Network with the organizers of the Faculty Diversity Initiatives to learn new strategies from my colleagues so that I grow as a teacher, mentor, and community member.

For me, the term underrepresented minority draws strong sentiment. Latent in its meaning, are narratives of oppression and like many

I struggled against internalizing the hard truths of my people's history into my own personal narrative. If anything, my existence is distinguished by exceptional resilience. Now with clarity, I reject narratives that undermine my strength and brilliance, and instead, I am nourished by the wisdom from my teachings. But getting to this point was a journey, and I was able to develop this clarity through guidance and support from my community and family. They say, "it takes a village," and without a doubt, the reason I have advanced this far in my academic career is, in part, because my scientific ambition was nurtured by many individuals who devote their efforts to promote diversity, inclusivity, and retention to ensure the success of underrepresented and historically marginalized members in our academic communities. In kind, I am committed to empowering young minds.