

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

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My commitment to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion is derived from my personal experience. I grew up in a minority family in China and lived in a diverse community for many years. In my childhood, I got in touch with a number of people who have different religions and backgrounds. My grandparents, father and aunt were middle school teachers who have dedicated their lives to educating students from various backgrounds. My family instilled in me the importance of embracing the differences among people. This experience inspired me to pursue the ambition of becoming an educator who can address any inequity in academia.

During my undergraduate studies in China, I was actively engaged in a number of activities for minority students since I am one of them. I directly observed the fact that inclusion makes us stronger. I was the leader of my school's show host team in which over two-thirds of the team members were female. I was fortunate to collaborate with them in many school events which had thousands of attendees. From this experience, I have learned how diversity broadens our vision and improves the quality of the services we provide to other people

As a PhD student at Arizona State University, I was honored to work with people from a variety of countries, with different colors and orientations. For example, my lab mates are from many different countries in America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Over the span of my collaboration with them, I was surprised by the innovation derived from the fusion of a variety of views. In my opinion, diversity is the key component that drives our economy, our society and our world to archive progress. In the meantime, it is important to cultivate new minority students to get the skills needed to advance their careers while still maintaining the diversity among people.

In the future, as a faculty member, I would leverage my previous experience in academia to take a leadership position in contributing to diversity. I will continue my commitment to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion. From the perspective of teaching, I will encourage students to collaborate with others from various backgrounds on group projects. Moreover, I will also organize in-class round table discussions that let students form small random groups with others to discuss the recent hot topics from the Big Data area. This will give students an opportunity to learn different opinions and realize the importance of diversity. I will strive to include diversity, equity and inclusion in my teaching approach. My experience gave me the sensitivity that I need to relate to students from diverse backgrounds. I hope that they can find their voices in the class. From the perspective of research, I would embrace and welcome students and researchers from any background, especially under-represented groups, into my research team. I will apply for funds from various agencies such as NSF to actively hire and educate minority graduate students in my area, and to encourage them in their academic careers.

Furthermore, I would also contribute to diversity by organizing workshops and lectures offering general career advice. I would encourage graduate students from different categories to apply for specific fellowships or career opportunities that lead to their success. I would work with students to develop and implement outreach activities related to Computer Science, Data Science or STEM in general, and to help minority graduate students and researchers find resources that will be beneficial to their research.

In conclusion, I believe that academia must strive to expand diversity by welcoming people from different categories of socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, nationality and intellectual perspective. This will create a broader pool of world views and in turn promise all of us a brighter future for our society. It is exactly as the Arizona State University Charter says: "A university is measured not by whom we exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed".