

Brian Chavez

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Personal Statement

As a first-generation student who emigrated from Mexico at the age of twelve, my past experiences have impacted my academic mission. In an idealistic view, arriving to the United States was the best decision of my life, since I was going to encounter the opportunities that my hometown lacks; education and jobs. My family and I began a new phase in our life. The first and major barrier was the language and culture. In order to immerse into my community, I had to learn English to communicate effectively in school. Also, I learned to value one important component of American culture; diversity. I was completely devoted to adapt to the American norms in order to be accepted, leaving behind my past identity. My native language and culture took a second role since I felt they were not appreciated. This perspective changed when I took a Spanish course at Hartnell College. There, I realized how unique and powerful my language and culture are as I was exposed to information prohibited in our current education system. Since that moment, my academic mission changed. I was strongly determined than ever before to end with the stereotypes that forced me to feel embarrassed of my ancestry. When I perceived the long-lasting impact that a teacher can have on students, I decided to take this path. In reality, they have the power to create communities since they represent the origin of knowledge and the reflection of society.

Being this my first semester at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB), I have acquired sufficient information to formulate a perspective about what this institution offers.

For instance, it made me proud to know that I am attending an academic institution that is committed to serve our communities by making service learning a requirement for graduation. Students have the opportunity to apply their active knowledge in real life scenarios that will prepare them to be conscious citizens. In addition, some departments of the university require students to create an electronic portfolio that will archive the learning outcomes of their courses, projects, activities with the community and important documents such as a personal statement and a résumé, among others. CSUMB always remarks that they will continue to support their students even after graduation until they achieve their goals.

After obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures at CSUMB, I plan to continue my education at CSU Fresno to earn a Master's Degree in Spanish. At the same time, I would like to work in a teaching associate at such institution to apply my knowledge in a college level Spanish course. Depending upon the situation, I would like to attend graduate school. My academic goal is to teach upper division courses at a community college or a university. Despite the education or teaching level, I am eager to leave a legacy to my students. I am committed to contribute in their process of language and cultural acceptance, since it is a fundamental element in the conception of an identity. They should be able to embrace their heritage without fear of rejection.