

## STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION TO DIVERSITY

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Having spent 15 years of my adolescent life in South Korea, and being fully Japanese by descent, while being born in the United States, I have had the unique opportunity to develop an *international* perspective of things from a very young age. My ability to converse fluently in 3 languages has also greatly helped me to view different people and situations from multiple angles. With this sort of upbringing, I have learned from an early age that not only is diversity important, but tolerant diversity is just as important. Somehow it is the human tendency in a diverse environment, whether it may be in terms of race, culture, language, or ideas, when proper communication cannot be made, for people to lump the “other group” into one generic category. This can be for better or for worse, but often times manifests itself in unproductive ways when team work is required to reach a common goal. Due to my background and abilities, I have countless times served as a mediator of sorts between opposing groups often times as an interpreter, translator, or just simply as a arbitrator.

This way of thinking has served me invaluablely also in my professional career to put myself in other peoples’ shoes. I have contributed to the education of a diverse body of students through Physics Laboratory courses that I taught at University of Hawaii at Manoa for 3 semesters from 2007 to 2009. The ethnic and cultural atmosphere in Hawaii is one of the most diverse on the planet. The University of Hawaii system not only attracts students internationally from Asia and from around the globe, but also serves as the hub of higher learning for minority students coming from nations in the Pacific Rim such as the Marshall Islands and Micronesia. In this cultural melting pot, instructors are required to effectively convey information in an inclusive and efficient way while understanding each of the students’ cultures and needs as best as possible. For example, these needs may include supplemental instruction if English is not the student’s primary language, or specific attention if the student comes from a background where STEM is not traditionally emphasized.

In addition, my research has allowed me to live and work in various countries around the globe such as Japan and Italy giving me the opportunity to work with a wide range of ethnicities and cultures. For example, during my time in Japan, I volunteered to be a presenter to introduce and explain about the various research activities conducted by our neutrino experiment (KamLAND) to Japanese undergraduate students at Tohoku University. Through this event, I was able appeal to diversity by conveying the importance of international collaboration that our experiment requires to successfully operate the experiment.

I believe that my multi-cultural upbringing and experiences working in very diverse teams of international collaborators, can significantly contribute to the spectrum of diversity and inclusive excellence that UCI cherishes.