

## Diversity Statement

I understand, value, and support how important it is to maintain core academic values that support the success of groups that face unique challenges. At a minimum, diversity embodies the inclusion of undocumented and first generation students, communities of color that are historically underserved, and LGBTQ students. Besides respecting, supporting, and fostering diversity, I expect this mindset to strengthen a community through innovation and a cohesive atmosphere.

As a biostatistician, I worked with visiting international scholars from Mexico, Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Ethiopia at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Department of Psychiatry. My role was to collaborate with them in manuscript development while structuring analyses that matched their hypotheses, analyzing their data, and presenting their results for publication in peer-reviewed journals. As a researcher at the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, I learned from some of my colleagues about the different cultural aspects of their work in eating disorders research. This awareness strengthened my abilities to consider research problems from different perspectives -- what I consider an asset in innovative work.

In my doctoral studies, I spent several years working with data derived from a Chilean infancy cohort recruited from low- to middle-income neighborhoods. In collaborating with the international investigators of this study, I developed a better understanding of how economic development in Chile affected public health during the time of participant recruitment in the 1990s, which included a shift to Western dietary patterns and lifestyle characteristics. This shift shaped the health of the population I studied and informed the first aim of my dissertation: "Sociodemographic predictors of early postnatal growth: Evidence from a Chilean infancy cohort." Similar to my work as a biostatistician, my work with diverse groups enriched my research and understanding of burdens faced by underserved groups.

In these roles as a biostatistician and epidemiology doctoral student, I developed a better understanding of perspectives and cultural aspects outside of my range of understanding. These experiences also reinforced the value of broadening my perspectives, in this case strengthening my development as a researcher by expanding my understanding of problems and burdens faced by diverse groups. Although I could consider my role as a collaborator as helping these researchers overcome any barriers in promoting their academic careers, I also believe that the people I mentioned above mentored me more than the opposite. I would be thrilled to function in a role advancing the professional development of diverse groups of students as they strengthen their advanced methodological skills and further their research careers.

As a professor starting in the Department of Population Health Sciences at Duke University, I expect to work in several capacities to support diversity and enhance health equity. Efforts within the classroom can start with efforts to include a syllabus that includes a diversity statement, and continue with a focus on health disparities within the curriculum, signaling an inclusive atmosphere. I plan to build a diverse group of students within my research group by implementing fair and inclusive policies, set norms for acceptable workplace conduct, and provide opportunities for mentorship and networking. Activities can include holding regular lab meetings discussing inclusive practices, mentoring students through manuscript writing and grant development activities, and outreach activities in underserved populations promoting public health research. To bolster these activities, I would seek the support of federal funding sources to build my lab while accessing resources available from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Duke University.