**Diversity Statement**

David Vasquez

One of the things that drew me to the College of Business at OSU to pursue my MBA was my love for innovation, entrepreneurship and technology. The way I engage in this world is twofold. First, I love learning about big picture things that are happening in the world of startups. Things like who large venture funds are investing in or who has been acquired by companies like Google or Dropbox. I also like to engage in innovation in my everyday life. Recently, I was able to work with an OSU Professor helping him to gain funding and start his business. I also am currently working on a small mobile app to help students find and attend campus events.

Why I mention this is that I think it is important that everyone engages in creating an inclusive and welcoming community in a similar fashion. While working at the Basic Needs Center at OSU our team was able to learn about large scale diversity initiatives while also engaging in making a difference in the everyday lives of the community. One of the things that drew me to this role is the opportunity to continue this type of work in the OSU Community. I love the goal of inclusive excellence that is laid forth by the Office of Institutional Diversity and feel this position would allow me to really make a difference.

The opportunity to work directly with business students as they prepare to become future leaders is such an incredible opportunity to make a positive difference that truly can have a global reach. I have always striven in my professional and academic work to create and educate on the importance of creating and striving towards inclusive excellence. I don’t just view these things as broad initiatives but things that can make a positive impact in the day to day lives of students.

I believe there are a number of key areas in my background that have enabled me to succeed and promote inclusion as a member of the Career Success Team in the College of Business. The first occurred during an internship I had at Legacy Health System in Portland, Oregon. I was asked by the Director of the Supply Chain to create a plan to attract and retain more minority owned vendors. As part of this program, I was able to reach out and meet with many different minority business owners and learn firsthand about the experiences they have had. For an internship I felt that it was such an incredible experience in it enabling me to learn so much and also to help put together a plan that is still in use at Legacy Health System. During my MBA I worked at the Career Development Center engaging with a diverse audience of students and employers working to create opportunities for students to learn about themselves and the careers they wished to pursue.

More recently I worked as a Research and Data Analyst at the Basic Needs Center at OSU. In my role here I engaged and supported a diverse range of students through one on one support and also helping to run a number of programs including a general program that helped us connect students with assistance that aligned directly with their personal needs. As part of my role I would help process on average about one thousand applications per term of students needing financial, medical or general support. One aspect of the applications allowed for students to fill in and discuss their own personal needs which allowed them to talk about the experiences they were going through. My work included reading through these applications and then providing support for students. It could often be difficult and challenging seeing some of the struggles that students experience but also an incredible learning experience that has allowed me to grow in both empathy and my desire to support students. My role at the Basic Need Center helped to grow my own understanding of diversity and inclusion not just from an academic or institutional level but on a much more personal level.

My background also includes one on one work mentoring student athletes, working as a teaching assistant in the College of Engineering and teaching courses at both OSU and LBCC. There are a number of steps I have taken in my professional and teaching positions to try to help remove these barriers and create opportunity for all students. The first is that I always work to create an open and inclusive atmosphere in the classroom that allows every student to feel welcome and appreciated. One of the small things is I do is plan small class activities that allow students to interact with most everyone from the course. I feel these small interactions create a more supportive and accepting classroom where students feel free to speak out and also learn about the unique and interesting backgrounds of their peers. I also view education as powerful so I work to bring up these issues in a way that is supportive of all students and promotes the ability to listen and be open to accepting challenging ideas.

I think as a teacher communication is incredibly important and key to any good communication is the ability to listen. I work hard to create positive relationships with every student I engage with and a big part of this is listening to them. By listening I am able to learn about small things like what they are struggling with in class to larger issues they are facing. From this I have been able to help students find resources on campus to help them deal with all kinds of issues they face.

I would be incredibly proud to be a faculty member at OSU working in the College of Business where so many people actively work to create an inclusive and welcoming environment. My background has allowed me to listen to the challenges faced by many students and I am passionate about doing all I can to help remove barriers through support and education. If selected for this role I would love to continue my own learning since I know that solving complex issues takes time and personal growth. I also would like to engage with other faculty and staff to implement effective and supportive ideas that benefit students in a positive and meaningful way.