describe your personal background personal challenges and opportunities that have impacted your decision to pursue a graduate degree.

I was born Mexico city to a Mexican father and an American mother. I grew up speaking English, spanish and a dirty mix of the two.

Early on I noticed that in both languages the way I talked and thought seemed off in some way.

My spanish was too stiff for the native spanish speakers and my english was far too loose for the native english speakers.

This keyed me in to how important language was and how it seeps its way into everything.

In trying to understand language better I tried studying literature. It was soon obvious I wasn't good at it nor did it satisfy my curiosity around the uniqueness of language.

Before my senior year in high school I managed sweet talk my way into an internship with Microsoft. It was there where I worked on a project exploring public sentiment on twitter for the mexican government.

This project showed I could use computers to study how humans used language as a proxy for some unknown latent variable. I was hooked. I needed to study computer science.

When I got to college I soon learned that my highschool had not prepared me for a Engineering school. Having no computer classes or high level math classes I found myself behind most other students and worked feverishly to catch up.

My junior year I took a machine learning course with <ML at RPI professors name>. This class was the most difficult class I took all college but as I struggled through it I was mentally thriving.

Inspired in learning how system can learn from large streams of data I took a semester off to work as a researcher at a Natural Language Processing firm(Basis Technology). It was here that I got my first real taste of research. I dove in head first into the world of NLP and began to learn about the broader community.

After I graduated I came to Microsoft with a goal of finding a team I could work on language problems with. When I joined the translation services team in 2016 I became introduced to Neural Machine Translation via some presentations at Microsoft Research. Seeing how useful this could be I dove into understanding the subject matter and I used it as a spring board build up an adhoc foundation on

Seeking to formalize my knowledge in the world of NLP I enrolled in a masters at the University of Washington where I have built up a background in Linguistics and Computaional methods for NLP.

In all of my path through the academic and research world I have always been surprised by how few LatinX researchers and academics are. Intiaially I viewed this as a part of the system which I could not do much to change. After being involved with