**Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority**                    February 5, 2025

Dear Hiring Team,

My name is Suzanne Thornton and I am writing to apply for the Data Analyst (DMD09415) position at LAHSA. I realize that in some ways I may be different from the candidate you expect to hire. For instance, I hail from the east coast and I've worked primarily as a statistical researcher. Nevertheless, I hope you will consider my application because, in me, you will find a person of genuine compassion with a drive to use and develop their skills to improve upon the lives of people experiencing homelessness.

The commonalities between myself and people without shelter or homes has been apparent to me from a young age. The first time I really internalized the tenuous line between being housed and unhoused in our country was as a college student, volunteering at a food pantry. Gainesville, Florida is know as a local hub for people experiencing homelessness. As a college student living in scholarship housing and eventually moving up to renting a converted garage, I was aware of my privilege even as I pinched every penny. I participated in various volunteer activities that centered around providing food to the hungry. One day in a soup kitchen I remember starting up a conversation with a particularly grumpy young man I served. The 'Polyanna' in me wanted to offer some friendly company but I remember the deep dread I felt upon learning that this young man had a PhD. To me, education was my savior, the ticket to a solidly reliable middle-class life. In fact, my educational choices were driven by my desire to provide for myself in this way. But here was a stark reminder that no matter how educated, I am still vulnerable to the same circumstances as those experiencing homelessness. Over a decade later, I now live in West Philadelphia, on the outskirts of the city. I love my neighbors and I get to enjoy daily walks with my dog near a city park. But every day, we pass camps set up by people experiencing homelessness. Right along the city border, with plenty of wooded areas, there's one woman who has lived in a tent she built for herself for over five years now. I want to be of service to people who are in these kinds of situations. I want to use statistics and data science for something worthwhile. I'd like to put my talents and efforts into eradicating homelessness.

Finally, I want to address a weak point of my application. My experience with SQL is limited. Last year, I completed an introductory course on SQL on the online learning platform Coursera. However, I have not yet had the opportunity to use SQL in a professional capacity. I am a talented statistical programmer in other languages like R and Python and I am confident that I will lear and master SQL rapidly. Also, although my experience with Tableau is also limited (because I have primarily used R for data visualization), I have found the application to be very user friendly and I am looking forward to expanding my experience with this platform and documenting it here: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/suzanne.thornton/vizzes.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions for me and feel free to view my professional website (link in footer below) for additional information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


**Suzanne Thornton, PhD**

**Suzanne Thornton, PhD**
*Philadelphia, PA – USA*
📱 *+1 (863) 370 9389*   •   ✉ *thornton.suzy@gmail.com*
🌐 *dr-suz.github.io/*