

Diversity Statement

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Prompt

Stanford University welcomes graduate applications from individuals with a broad range of experiences, interests, and backgrounds who would contribute to our community of scholars. We invite you to share the lived experiences, demonstrated values, perspectives, and/or activities that shape you as a scholar and would help you to make a distinctive contribution to Stanford University.

Response

Growing up in Taiwan, I didn't receive a particularly inspiring education. Each day at school was a marathon of passive lectures, absorbing mountains of information, and the relentless pursuit of high scores on standardized exams. While this environment provided me a solid academic foundation, it left little room for genuine curiosity and exploration. Like many of my peers, I find myself disconnected to the purpose of my studies, viewing knowledge as a mere tool for achieving academic success.

Coming to the United States for higher education transformed my perspective. Here, learning was no longer about passive absorption but active engagement, with the intention behind every step thoughtfully explained. This shift allowed me to see that behind every piece of knowledge, whether simple or complex, lies a core idea and motivation. After understanding the motivation behind my studies, I soon found myself in love with learning and picked up a major in mathematics, a subject I had previously found dull and intimidating.

This stark contrast between the two educational paradigms sparked my desire to democratize access to knowledge. Recognizing the privilege of studying abroad, I felt a responsibility to give back to the community that had shaped me. This led to the creation of my Chinese math blog, where I aim to share high-level mathematical concepts I find interesting to a general Taiwanese audience. My goal was to demystify the subject, showing that difficult subjects like math are not as intimidating as they may seem, inspiring others in the same fashion my college education inspired me. Though modest in scale, my blog represents a commitment to sharing the transformative power of accessible education.

At Stanford, I aim to further this mission by bridging gaps in understanding and fostering inclusivity in academic spaces. I believe even abstract subjects like mathematics and theoretical computer science can be made approachable and inspiring with the right introductions. Drawing on my experiences with contrasting educational systems, I hope to bring this perspective to the classrooms and research groups at Stanford, bridging the

knowledge gap between different educational backgrounds and disciplines and build a more inclusive academic environment.