MSW Personal Statement

Question 1

Every since I was sixteen years old I knew I wanted to help people. Once I entered college I began to explore different majors. I went in undecided, but soon enough the answers were all there. Shortly after my college career began I started to volunteer at the local church. It began with fundraisers and tutoring but eventually branched off into helping and educating inner city youth. This experience offered a certain type of satisfaction that I had never felt before. It was nothing like any other job I had. I tried working in the insurance industry for several years because it intrigued me. It just did not offer this type of self gratification. I actually felt and knew I was making a difference.

This rewarding event led me examine my career goals. I decided I wanted to make a difference for those who were underrepresented. The opportunity to touch lives and spirits of all backgrounds and economic statuses was worthwhile. My work at the church matured and enlightened me. I knew at that moment I was destined to become a social worker. This profession had all the essential ingredients to greatness. It offers change, encouragement and hope to a failing social society. I would like to have an impact on our changing society. I would like the chance to advocate for others and assist in any way I can.

As a graduate student of social work I will remain committed to my vision while successfully completing the Master of Social work program. During this demanding time I will continue to have the support of my family, friends and co-workers. I will be able to arrange my schedule to fit the needs of the program. My current work position will accommodate for classes and internships. My work schedule will be amended as needed to meet the demands of the program. Personally my mother will continue to be my foundation. She will assist with all other matters at home. She has agreed to support me and my son in any way possible so I can complete school. This is the perfect time in my life to make this change. My son is only two years old and will be just entering school at the conclusion of this program. My ultimate goal is to continue working to obtain my LCSW license.

Question 2

Working for the County of San Diego has broadened my perception of the social work profession. On a day to day basis I work in conjunction with protective services workers (social workers), in the adoption assistance unit. My job is to provide adoption assistance program eligibility for adoptive parents and their children who qualify for the program. In order to determine eligibility I must work closely with social workers to retrieve qualifying information regarding the parent and the child. In order for me to successfully complete my job I must have knowledge of social work policies, procedures, and best practices. These skills are then used to assist my adoptive parents with any issues or concerns they may have.

Volunteering at my church keeps me in tune with our every changing society. I am able to listen closely to my audience and assist the youth with an assortment of issues. My current church is in a less then desirable area of San Diego. The congregation is predominately African American and Latino. Through our ministries I am able to assist our youth in planning for the future. I have designed a program for middle and high school youth to achieve their personal goals. I started this program at the church because I saw a need for our youth. Most of them do not always have parents to come home to and assist with their homework let alone spend time with them. This program offered a safe haven for youth to come and talk about real life issues. We look at society from the teen perspective and come up with solutions for immediate issues. My work has not only strengthened me but it has revitalized me. I want to learn more so I am able to share with others in my community. The idea of me being able to make a difference or point someone in the right direction is pleasing. I am especially excited to have the opportunity to be a part of the larger picture. These experiences have set the platform for my next step. I will allow me to grow and excel in this profession.

Question 3

Developing as a professional social worker will become a lifelong task. In order to effectively communicate and service clients you must first be willing to learn. I am willing to learn and I respond very well to change. Our society is multi-faceted and is always evolving. It would be my professional duty to obtain the proper training and take the appropriate classes to keep myself up to speed with our changing society. One of my strengths that would be an asset to the program is my ability to keep an open mind. Regardless of my personal beliefs I am able to remain objective to effectively serve my clientele. My responsiveness to social situations, as a black woman, I would be able to relate to my clients. My background and the area in which I lived will assist in building productive relationships. I will be able to offer a level of insight and perspective that other social workers who have not shared these experiences may not be able to offer.

In this profession growth is fundamental in providing competent service. An opportunity for growth for me would be to try and hold back emotions. I find myself feeling sorry for others and try to do anything to help. The problem with this is there is a point when you have allowed yourself to become vulnerable to your clients. Your intentions are good but now you have become too involved. With experience and completing the program I am confident that I will find a common median. Growth in this area is essential and eventually become my strength. Question 4

One specific ethical dilemma I experienced at work was with one of my current clients. The adoptive parents were going through a divorce where custody was being transferred from parent to parent. At this time the parents are no longer speaking and they both are liable for the adoptive child and entitled to the monthly adoption assistance benefit. Eventually I received a call from the adoptive father who is furious with the mother because he believes she is not taking care of the child. He would like for me to give him the child’s social security number and address. When I did not comply he says the child is no longer living with the mother and has not been for the past month. In a rage he tells me to stop all benefits to his future ex-wife immediately. Being familiar with this case I knew I had to investigate further. I found that the father did not have custody at the present time. I spoke back with the father and explained to him that I was unable to grant his request. I told him that I was unable to discuss this case with him because of a court order stating the mother is now responsible for the child. He was furious and wanted me to stop paying her the monthly benefit. I advised him again that I could not discuss the particulars of the case. Later that day I spoke with the adoptive mother who was shocked that the father contacted me. The judge had concluded that the father was unstable and that he would not have custody of their adoptive child.

In this situation I used my competence and service to guide me in handling my client. My expertise did not allow me to make a rush decision. The ultimate goal was to protect the minor the best way possible. I was able to do this by researching the fathers claim and finding out the true facts. I was able to formulate a mature judgment which led me make a logical decision. As the worker it is my responsibility to service the child and his parent. I had no obligation to the father because of the legal action taken by the mother. As an adoption worker I must maintain a level of confidentiality and integrity.

Question 5

My role as a social worker today would be to continue to advocate for those in need of social, economic, mental health and general services. As an African American woman I can have a positive impact on this profession. My view on life and my social experiences mirror many requesting social services. I am a single mother, working full time and going to school. There are many who are just like me or want what I am working toward. They just do not have the guidance and ambition to obtain it. I want to help that, I want those of color to know there are many opportunities available. I believe I can offer a sense of security to others who look like me. I would be living proof that people of color have the ability to make a difference in their lives and others around them. Being a black, single mother who struggled for several years to obtain my degree could be looked upon as a symbol of hope. I sign of resilience that can be obtained as long as you are committed to your goals.

I will continue the tradition and advocate for those discriminated against. The ethical principles of social work will guide me in this journey. I will service my clients, address any social issues and will continue to challenge social injustice. I will respect all people no matter their race, religion or gender and continue to provide exemplary service with integrity and competence.