

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Ke Chao¹

Diversity and equity are of great importance to me. I believe that the existence of prejudice, inequity and discrimination is because that people are inclined to seeking common ground, while resistant to reserve and respect differences. Human beings are heterogeneous. A true supporter of diversity need to be open-minded to accept and respect the differences across people. Respectively, an inclusive community should provide equal opportunities and accommodate diversified thinking. My growth experiences in China and in the United States shape my thoughts on prioritizing diversity.

I am from a middle-class family in Eastern China. When I was an undergraduate, I volunteered to take part in a program of aiding education in a village of Guangxi, an underdeveloped region in China. During my stay, I was deeply shocked by the poor infrastructures and was profoundly moved by the students' desire of learning. My students are mostly left-behind children whose parents are migrant workers in other provinces. Many students were taught by their parents that to study is their only way to leave the depressed area and find a decent job in big cities. I still remember the excited faces when my students received the children's books that are donated by us. By that time I first profoundly recognized the importance to provide opportunities to minorities who haven't always received the chances like me. Ever since then, I form the habit to donate my used books or clothes to those in need. The experience as a volunteer teacher deeply changed me by arousing my empathy and inspired me to endeavor to help the group of minorities.

My experiences in the United States deepen my understanding about promoting diversity. As a Chinese, I spent most of my life living in a environment where Asians consist of over 95% of the total population. Because of the lack of exposure to a multi-cultural environment, before I came to the United States, the treasuring of diversity across different cultures was a vague idea to me. Yet, it completely changed after I came to the United States. The program I have attended is fully diversified, where I met colleagues from all over the world. Except cooperating in study and research, we constantly communicate with each other to share our own culture, talk about various religions and discuss on the histories of different countries. In the interactions with my colleagues, I have learnt different perspectives, attitudes and ways of thinking which I fully respect. One of my best friend is a girl from India. We talked a lot about the differences and similarities in histories and religions between India and China. Over the past few years, we sincerely support each other. We constantly encourage each other to overcome the pressure from the pandemic and the stress of the incoming job market. I think the diversified environment of the United States gives me a chance to step out of my boundaries and embraces the world. By providing me the opportunities to communicate to people with different cultures, races, religions, it shaped me as a person who has open mind and a person who is willing to accept, respect and embrace the differences across people.

In my future work, I will firmly contribute to the diversity, equity and inclusion of the community. I will strive to provide opportunities to those underrepresented, endeavor to promote communications across different groups of people, and contribute to creating an inclusive working environment.

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