I am deeply committed to diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) in academia, drawing upon my personal experiences. As a first-generation college graduate and a person of color belonging to the lowest socioeconomic stratum in Indian society, I have firsthand experiences with the challenges that underrepresented minorities encounter, not just within academia but throughout social life. Given my background, I am well-positioned to contribute to the university's DEI efforts through my research, teaching, mentorship, and advocacy for equity.

I grew up in India's lowest socioeconomic strata and faced discrimination in the form of restricted access to education, the labor market, and social capital. I was mistreated by high-caste educators and faced housing challenges due to caste-based bias since high-caste landlords are reluctant to rent out to low-caste tenants. These experiences underscore the stark disparities in our society. However, I also benefited from public policies such as food subsidies and competitive scholarships. These policies have played a pivotal role in facilitating education and ensuring food for my family. One of these competitive scholarships helped me to become the first individual from my village to embark on a journey toward higher education in the United States. I am now a researcher and teacher who focuses on the impact of policies on health, human capital, and welfare, with a particular focus on expanding opportunities for underrepresented and marginalized populations. I believe that education and research can be used to uplift marginalized communities.

I was recently chosen as a Diversity Scholar at American University's Public Policy Department, where I had the opportunity to spend a week with scholars from other diverse backgrounds, including Native Americans, Blacks, and Hispanics. Interactions with them provided new perspectives on the inclusion of voices from diverse and under-representative communities in academia. Similarly, I engage with local schools in my hometown in India to share insights about higher education and my personal journey to the United States. My experiences of resilience and marginalization motivate me to explore initiatives that uplift marginalized communities through education and research. Prior to pursuing graduate studies, I gained practical insights by working at construction sites and understanding the challenges faced by daily wage laborers. This experience provided a deeper, further shaping my perspective on the integration of real-life experiences into academic research and policy formulation, with a focus on economic equity and social justice.

As a person of color and a First-Generation scholar, I deeply grasp the imperative of fostering inclusivity. Actively, I engage in diversity initiatives: mentoring First-generation students, mentoring two undergrad students in their capstone project under Prof. Jeremy Foltz, and representing peers in faculty and Ph.D. selection panels. Through these roles, I aim to attract diverse talents to economics, honing skills to implement DEI measures in hiring. I mentor in the NextGen Population program, backed by NICHD and the Population Association of America (PAA), nurturing a diverse cohort of future scholars.

In my research, I bolster Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by investigating technology's race, geography, age, and gender-based variations. In the US, pronounced disparities in high-speed broadband access rooted in race, rural locale, and gender emerged—likewise, my analysis probes caste-driven disparities in India's green revolution, favoring higher castes. Future pursuits encompass investigating disability-linked internet access utilizing restricted Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) data.

My personal encounters with inequity, unwavering DEI commitment, and research orientation empower me to make vital contributions to academic diversity and inclusion. I am devoted to cultivating inclusiveness, aiding underrepresented peers, and harmonizing diverse outlooks within economics and public policy. Collaborative prospects with diverse colleagues enthuse me, propelling affirmative transformation and advancing equity.