내가 살아온 배경은 태생부터 객관적으로 모자람보다는 풍족했음을 고백한다.

나는 한국에서 태어났지만 미국에서 공부한 부모님 덕에 내 일생의 반은 한국에서 반은 미국에서 보낼 수 있는 특권을 받고 자라왔다.

동서양의 교육과 문화, 사회, 정치를 고루 배울 수 있었다고 생각하고 내가 현재 가지고 있는 포용력과 다양한 시각과 문화에 대한 열린시각을 가질 수 있었던 바탕이 되었다고 생각한다.

돌아보면 내 삶에서 중요한 변화의 시기 때마다 나는 미국에 있었고, 나는 그것이 우연의 일치라고 생각하지 않는다.

언제나 나에게 미국으로의 생활권 변화는 새로운 도전이었고, 결국에는 그 당시의 나에서 한단계 더 성장하고 변화하는 발판이었다.

이러한 내 배경이 나에게 알려준 중요한 교훈은 가장 위험한 것은 세상은 넓으니 겸손하라는 것이었으며, 스스로에 대해 자만하지 말고 현실에 안주해서는 않된다는 것이었다.

나는 인생에 중요한 시기마다 고착될 수 있었던 내 환경을 변화시킬 수 있는 기회가 있었고 그로인해 항상 나보다 더 대단한 사람들과 소통하며 자만하지 않고 현실에 안주하지 않고 변화할 수 있었다.

나는 이것이 꼭 미국이기 때문에 가능하였다고 단정짓고 싶진 않다, 다만 내가 미국 사회에서 경험한 다양성과 포용의 경험 때문이라고 확신한다.

나라는 개인에 대한 발전과 목표에서 타인, 그리고 나아가 내가 속한 사회와, 나라와, 세상에서 내가 할 수 있는 일을 생각을 할 수 있을 만큼 나이를 먹은 이후에는 내가 살아온 경험을 다시한 번 돌아보게 되었다. 내가 미국과 한국 사이를 오가며 해왔던 학교에서의 공부와 여러 공공기관 및 민간기관에서의 인턴십, 그리고 심지어 한국에서 외국계 회사인 현재 MSCI 에서 일하면서 나는 두 지역의 장점만을 배우면서 성장했다고 자부할 수 있다.

MSCI 에서 일하면서 놀라운 경험을 하기도 했다. 내가 기업평가를 하던 기업들 중 employee diversity관련 법적분쟁으로 인해 다소 평가가 좋지 못한 한국 기업이 있었는데 우리와의 적극적인 소통을 통해 변화를 의지가 강한 기업이었다.

미국과 유럽의 선진화된 DE&I 경영철학을 가지고 있는 기업을 벤치마킹 하도록 이 기업에 조언을 했었고, 그에따라 즉각적으로 기업의 이사진의 여성비율을 늘리고 소액주주들의 의견에

한두해 만에 기업의 ESG 평가가 놀라울 정도로 개선되었고 뿐만 아니라 금융사와 운용사들의 우호적인 평가로 이어지고 금융시장에서의 평가 지표상승 또한 직접 목격할 수 있었다.

새로운 시각을 열어준 다는 것이 개인 뿐만이 아니라 집단, 사회, 그리고 나아가서는 세상에 얼마나 중요한 것인지를 실질적인 업무 경험으로 놀라운 경험 이였다.

그러나 새로운 시각만 제시한다고 모든 기업들이 이러한 변화를 이룬 것은 아니었다.

나는 이러한 급격한 변화가 집단에서 가능하다는 것을 목격하고, 변화 할 수 있었던 집단들의 공통적인 이유를 찾기 시작했다.

그 결론에 도달했던 것은 바로 관련한 규제들에 대한 회사의 공시의무화에 대한 차이였고 그 차이는 관련 규제들의 의무화 및 법제화에 의해서 가능했다.

집단과 나아가 사회가 변화하기 위해서는 어느정도의 사회적으로 합의된 강제성이 필수적이라는 것을 깨달을 수 있었고 올바른 합의와 협력을 통한이러한 규제화를 위해서는 관련된 framework들을 더 세부적으로 분석할 수 있는 법에 대한 지식이 단연코 필수적인 바탕이 된다는 결론에 이르렀다.

내가 학계에서, 사회에서, 그리고 일터에서 배운 것은 모두 일맥상통한다. 다양성의 포용과 변화의 중요성이다. 이것은 비단 나라는 개인의 발전에 국한되지 않고 집단과 사회의 발전에도 필수불가결한 요소라는 것을 경험에서 배울 수 있었고. 다만 개인은 단신이기에 생각만으로 실천에 옮길 수 있지만 집단은 다수의 머리가 공존하기때문에 생각과 사회적 인식만 높이는 것에 그쳐서는 변화가 굉장히 더디고 이루어지지 않는 다는 것 또한 목격했다. 그리고 가능하기 위해서는개인의 목표설정, 집단의 회칙화 처럼 합리적인 소통을 통한 사회의 법제화가 가장 기본적인 근간이 된다는 것을 알게 됐다.

나는 이러한 결론에 도달하였기 떄문에 일하기 시작한지 4년을 바라보기 시작한 지금, 법을 공부하지 않을 수 없게 되었다. 미국에서의 법공부가 내 소신에 대한 확고한 실행력을 겸비할 수 있는 또한번의 변화와 성장의 기회가 될 것을 믿어 의심치 않는다. 지금까지의 미국행은 나라는 개인의 발전을 위해서였다면, 이번에는 법이라는 강력한 도구를 갖춤으로서 나 개인의 성장만이 아닌 사회적으로 긍정적인 영향력을 끼칠 수있는 사람으로 발돋움 하기 위함임을 밝힌다.

I confess that my background has been objectively richer than poor since birth.

I was born in Korea, but thanks to my parents who studied in the United States, I was privileged to spend nearly half of my life in the States and half in Korea.

I believe that I was able to learn about both Eastern and Western education, culture, society, and politics, and I believe that it has helped me to develop the tolerance and openness to different perspectives and cultures that I have today.

When I look back, I realize that during every period of significant change in my life, I was in the United States, and I don't think that's a coincidence.

It was always a new challenge for me, and ultimately a springboard to grow and change from who I was at the time.

The most important lesson my background taught me was to be humble because the world is a big place and the most dangerous thing to do is not to get cocky and become complacent.

I've had the opportunity to change my environment, which could have been stagnant at critical times in my life, and because of that, I've always been able to connect with people who are bigger than me, and I've been able to change without being complacent.

I don't want to say that this is necessarily because of the United States, but I'm sure it's because of the diversity and inclusion I've experienced in American society.

Being old enough to move on from my own personal development and goals to thinking about others and what I can do for my society, country, and the world, I have come to reflect on the experiences I have lived. Through my schooling in the U.S. and Korea, my internships in various public and private organizations, and even my current job at MSCI, a foreign-owned company in Korea, I can say that I have grown up learning the best of both worlds.

Working at MSCI has been an amazing experience. Among the companies I was rating, there was a Korean company that had a rather poor rating due to a legal dispute related to employee diversity, but the company was willing to change through active communication with us.

We advised the company to benchmark itself against companies with advanced DE&I management philosophies in the US and Europe. One company followed our advice and almost immediately appointed a Chief Diversity Officer and demonstrated a willingness to listen to minority shareholders by increasing the number of women on its board.

Within a year or two, I witnessed a remarkable improvement in the company's ESG assessment, as well as a favorable evaluation by financial institutions and investment managers, and an increase in its valuation metrics in the financial markets.

It was an eye-opening experience to see how important it is to open new perspectives, not only for individuals, but also for groups, society, and the world.

However, not all companies were able to achieve this transformation just by offering new perspectives.

I witnessed that such radical change is possible in groups, and I began to look for a common reason for the groups that were able to transform.

I came to the conclusion that it was the difference in how the companies' disclosures were mandated and enacted by the relevant regulations.

I came to the conclusion that a degree of socially agreed upon enforcement is essential for groups and even societies to change, and that knowledge of the law, which allows for a more detailed analysis of frameworks related to DE&I, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN Global Impact, and Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIBs), is an essential foundation for such enforcement through proper consensus and cooperation.

Everything I have learned in academia, in society and in the workplace is in line. It is the importance of embracing diversity and change. I have learned from experience that this is indispensable not only for the development of individuals, but also for the development of groups and societies. However, I have also witnessed that individuals are single-minded and can put their thoughts into action, but groups are made up of many heads, so change is very slow and cannot be achieved by merely raising thoughts and social awareness. I have also learned that the most basic foundation for this is the legislation of society through rational communication, such as goal-setting by individuals and encyclicalization by groups.

I came to this conclusion, and now, four years after I started working, I have no choice but to study law. I believe that studying law in the United States will be another opportunity for me to change and grow, and to be able to firmly implement my beliefs. While my previous journey to the United States was for my own personal development, this time, I hope to be equipped with the powerful tool of law so that I can make a positive impact not only on my personal growth but also on society.

Looking back on the intricate tapestry that weaves through my life, I have been fortunate to navigate through a world that is richly diverse but deeply interconnected. Born to a bicultural heritage, I danced freely between the vibrant landscapes of Korea and the United States. The balance has shaped me, giving me a profound respect for the subtle intricacies of the Eastern and Western cultures. With it has come an expanded view of the world; a natural aperture that drew out an allowance and understanding of the many diverse cultural backgrounds that create the fabric of individual and collective landscapes.

The pages of my journey are a testament to the transformative power of embracing diversity and inclusion. I experienced first-hand the dynamic interplay between cultural understanding and societal advancement throughout my academic and professional pursuits. My experiences in Korea and the United States provided a fertile environment for cultivating a deep-rooted appreciation and a steadfast dedication to building communities where diverse voices are not just heard but also respected.

For me, the transition to the professional domain ushered in a period where I could witness firsthand the transformative power of diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) practices on corporate governance and valuation, from the privileged vantage point of my role at MSCI. As I provided advice to a Korean company confronting a complex legal dispute centered on employee diversity, it quickly became evident how novel the principles underpinning advanced DE&I management were for them. Months of proactive engagement and counsel, informed by these principles, catalyzed a commitment to not only appoint a Chief Diversity Officer, but to increase the representation of women on its board by an order of magnitude. New perspectives, I realized, were critical not only for individuals—but for organizations and civilizations.

Most significantly, it made me acknowledge the harsh truth that change- particularly at organizational and societal levels- is usually slow and often largely resisted. As it transpired, it became evident to me that while advocating for diversity and inclusion is absolutely necessary, the fundamentals of real transformation must be more structured- based firmly on the rule of law. The realization that socially endorsed enforcements must be in place – through legal frameworks- for lasting change, was the defining moment in my career. It brought to my attention the indispensable nature of legal knowledge and the ability of the law to elicit agreement, create collaboration and at the end, effect societal change.

It is this awakening that prompted me to pursue legal studies—as it were, intending to put some lawyering in my do-gooding. It is this awakening that emboldens me as I step into this next chapter, confident that a legal education in the United States will arm me with the necessary tools not just to navigate but to mold the legal landscapes that determine the make-up and the confines of our societies. In merging my passion for desired social change with a rigorous legal foundation, I aspire to contribute my part to creating a more inclusive, equitable, and just world.

As I begin this journey, I am profoundly aware of the lessons that my unorthodox background has imparted—lessons about humility, about openness, and about the necessity of embracing change. These principles have shaped my navigation through periods of transition and they will continue to animate my entrance into the realm of legal studies. I aim to carve out a path that will allow me to immerse myself in specialties that intersect with DE&I—areas such as international law, labor law, and corporate governance, so that I can marry my own rich tapestry of experience with a passion for the legal work of advocacy.

In sum, my decision to pursue a legal career is not solely a career choice, but a profound commitment to use my rare background and experiences to make a difference. It is a promise to society that I will build a world where differences are celebrated, equity is achieved, and societal progress is the foundation fueling that synergy. I am excited to begin this next chapter not only confident that I can make a difference, but realizing that a legal education will amplify that call to action on an individual and systemic level.