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December 6, 2018

Pew Research Center  
1615 L Street NW, Suite 800

Washington D.C 20036

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my interest in the Politics Research Assistant Position at the Pew Research Center. I was drawn to this role because I am highly interested in the role that the Pew Research Center plays in working to inform people and policy makers what the American public is thinking. I am well-suited for this role because I have a strong interest in American politics and experience working with quantitative data sets to address specific research questions.

In the past five years, I have gradually become more interested in American politics, and, more specifically, the work done by election forecasters who attempt to predict what will happen during each election cycle. This got me interested in public polling and the insights that can be made from a thorough analysis of this data. This inspired me to start my own politics blog, where I am currently writing about what people can learn from the election results and exit polls. This project has inspired me to get more involved in public polling research and drew me to apply to this position at Pew Research Center.

My coursework and research experience in Economics and Political Science helped me further develop my writing and data analysis skills in more specific ways. As a Research Assistant in the Political Science department, I coded specific details of African newspaper articles into a spreadsheet to get a sense of what issues the media was covering in a specific election. In my economics coursework, I worked on a project that analyzed the link between obesity and higher health care costs. This project required me to run statistical tests and explain clearly how those numbers should inform policy makers about the link between obesity and health care expenditures. These experiences helped me understand the level of detail needed to effectively manage a large data set and allowed me to better understand the process of synthesizing the numbers into a written product that provides clear and concise conclusions.

I would like to apply my research and data analysis skills to the valuable work done to inform the public and policy makers of American public opinion at Pew Research Center. Thank you for considering my application. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (703)678-1899 or zachtspahr@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Zachary Spahr