Diversity Statement

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While promoting diversity is a goal that many share, achieving it is often difficult. Even further, the promotion of diversity does not ensure a culture of inclusion and equity. Based upon my experiences, I believe that addressing inclusivity and equity are the first steps in creating a diverse environment within both academia and the community.

1 Teaching

When I was assigned to teach a computer science course, it was discouraging to inherent a curriculum whose audience historically consisted of primarily male, tech-oriented students. In order to attract a more heterogeneous group of students, I restructured the curriculum to emphasize developing ideas to solve problems, rather than focusing on learning a particular language, since problem solving is a skill that is applicable across disciplines.

As a result, the class size steadily increased each year, growing from an initial size of 8 to 16+ students. Additionally, 63% of the students, on average, were female, and there was a consistent increase in the enrollment of non-STEM students. The specific steps taken to restructure this course, along with additional illustrations on how I created a more inclusive and accessible learning environment to promote diversity in the classroom, are discussed in my teaching statement.

2 Outreach

Importantly, diversity in mathematics should be promoted within both academia and the community. Consequently, I have actively worked to encourage underrepresented minority outside of the classroom. As a high school mathematics teacher, I helped recruit a number of female students for two-week summer programming courses. As the advisor to the school's math club, I helped foster students' enthusiasm for mathematics by arranging for their participation in numerous competitions and promoting club-sponsored activities for the student body.

Presently, I volunteer with the Tucson Math Circle, a program aimed at teaching secondary school students about mathematical concepts not found within the standard curriculum. The students attending the Math Circle have a variety of backgrounds in terms of age, race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. As mentioned in my teaching statement, I am interested in developing a program that excites the curiosity of the young students within the community.

3 Mentoring

As a Hispanic woman in mathematics, I have been fortunate to have been in supportive environments with strong female mentors. Unfortunately, the resources and opportunities made available to me are ones not shared by many women and underrepresented groups in mathematics. To that end, I am committed to cultivating welcoming environments and a culture of support.

While I have experience with advising undergraduate students in teaching and research, this year I became involved with the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM) Mentor Network, a program designed to mentor women interested in mathematics. Having been matched with a graduate student, I provide advice on aspects related to their mathematical career, such as maintaining a healthy work-life balance and networking with other mathematicians. I would like to continue to serve in positions that promote a culture of mentorship, and am interested in developing mentoring programs.

4 Conclusion

Although I use a variety of strategies, I am committed to staying informed of the best practices to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. Accordingly, I will continue to look for opportunities that promote diversity, foster relationships, and recruit underrepresented students.