

Cultural Identity/Values
-Katherine-



A photo of me, when I learned to ride a bike. I keep this photo in my room to remind me of where I started, and to remind myself to work hard for her.



Taken at Mount Saint Francis in southern Indiana. Growing up, I went to retreats here, went on hikes here, went to counseling here, and took pottery classes here. For me, it was a place of healing and renewal.



Running has always been one of my favorite activities, a coping skill I didn't know was a coping skill. My dad is a track coach, and so running is also a common point of interest in my family.

When I'm running is when I feel the most free.



St. Mary's/Santa Maria-- the church that raised me. 'Catholic' is still something I consider a part of my identity, even though I may not agree with all parts of it.



My First Communion. My mother planned this day for months as if it were my wedding day.



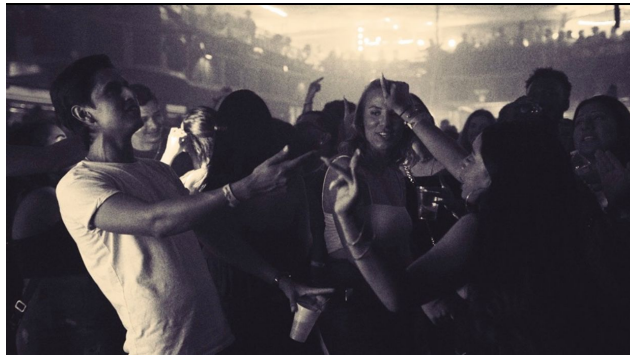
What made my church special was that they had one of the first Hispanic ministries in all of southern Indiana. Growing up, this is how I started to learn Spanish and connect to Mexican culture. In this picture I am helping with the first grade Sunday school. I loved that the sacraments were blended classes- Anglo and Hispanic families together.



For me, my friends are my family. Here is a photo from a recent coffee outing with one of my first friends in California who made me feel so welcome in a new and challenging place.



This was taken on the street I lived on in Alcala de Henares, Spain. Studying abroad taught me a lot of things and helped to shape me as a person. I learned what it felt like to be an outsider in a foreign place, and how it feels to struggle with communicating. This experience also reminded me that this world is very big, and there are many ways of living-- which is what makes it so interesting.



Even though I tend to spend most of my time doing school work or working in general, I also love to go dancing-- something that surprises most people. My favorite nights of dancing were always "Latin Nights" at the Vogue in Indianapolis.



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Date March 6, 2019

To: Katherine Winstead

REG ID: [REDACTED] 116496

Dear Kathrine,

Congratulations! I am pleased to inform you that the School of Social Work is recommending you to the SDSU Graduate Division for admission as a student in the Fall 2019 3 & 4 Year MSW Program. On behalf of the School of Social Work, I extend to you a warm welcome. We are confident that you will make a significant contribution to the profession of social work. We intend to provide you with a challenging and rewarding educational experience.

I remember when I received this letter I cried. It meant that not only was I the first in my family to graduate from college, but I would be the first one to attend graduate school as well.

But it also meant that I was going to have to leave things I loved behind (friends, family, etc) and start a new life in a new and different place. Adjusting to life here while completing grad school has been challenging, but rewarding. I'm grateful my journey took me here.

Social Problems



This photo was taken in La Mesa during protests following the death of George Floyd and many others. Police brutality and abuse of power is a continuing social problem globally, but especially in the United States (both historically and currently).



When I look at this photo, a poem comes to mind that includes
this:

*"If I cannot see the fires
As a result of Voices
That have been extinguished*

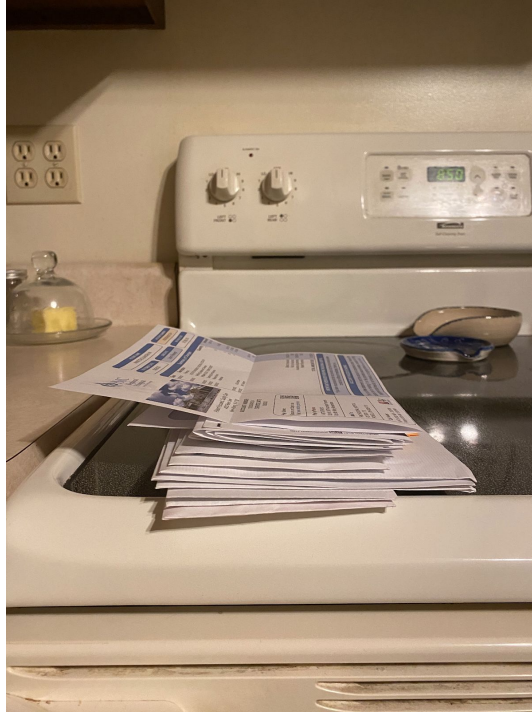
...

*I am the one whose character
Should be in question"*



This was taken at an ICE protest at a detention center in Otay Mesa near the border. The detainment and deportation of undocumented individuals and families is one of the cruelest injustices our country faces in these times.

In addition, in 2019, AB 32 was set into law, preventing the state of California from entering into or renewing contracts with for-profit prison companies after Jan. 1, 2020. The contract with CoreCivic, the company that owns and runs the facility, was set to expire in June of this year. They were still operating the facility in August when the protest occurred.



My mom's medical bills received just in the last two weeks- and she has health insurance. Medical debt is crippling to many families, including my own. In the United States, access to affordable and quality healthcare isn't a reality. The intersection of poverty and poor health is a death sentence for many.