

When applying for law school, I was not sure what profession I wanted to go into upon graduation. I consider myself to be an academic sponge; someone who wants to soak up any piece of knowledge wherever they go. However, I have a personal connection to the immigration and nationality law sector since my father is an immigrant from Colombia. While my academic goals are defined by my joy of learning and collaborating with other academic minds, my professional goals are solidified with my complex biracial identity in immigration law and procedure. Being granted this scholarship will allow me to eagerly achieve my academic goals to supplement my professional goals of becoming a successful and efficient immigration attorney.

I am biracial, with an American mother and a Colombian father, but it took me a long time to understand and accept my identity. In middle school, I deeply resented the Latin part of me. I hated the way kids would make fun of my arm hair or constantly teased that my skin was “too dark” for our town. But in high school, I went the opposite direction. I immersed myself in social justice education and dove so far into my Latin-half that I completely denied my whiteness altogether. I advocated for racial equality as a Latinx individual, yet would erupt in anger when confronted with the fact that I had a white mother. It felt like I had to choose between one identity over the other.

In college, I was able to understand and accept that two truths can exist at once within my own identity. Biracial children are born with a predetermined understanding of two different worlds in one body. For me, I was not just White, I was not just Latin, I was both. I was the bridge between two distinct worlds, and I want to continue being this bridge in more concrete and impactful ways.

Being biracial provides me with a unique understanding of multiple points of view, a foundational quality in the practice of law. All sides of an argument must be considered and understood to the fullest extent before a case can be adjudicated. This is especially important in immigration law, where both a migrant's country of origin and the United States' interests must be considered when establishing an immigrant or nonimmigrant case.

I aspire to use my multi-world understanding within the existing immigration legal framework to advocate for foreign nationals who want to establish their lives in the United States, bringing decades of information, rich culture, and experiences with them. I currently work at an immigration and nationality law firm as an Immigration Specialist, where I personally connect with my clients to ensure that they are receiving the same quality of representation and care as I wanted my father to receive when he was a new immigrant to the U.S. My love of education and my connection to my identity will open up pathways to becoming a successful immigration attorney.

My professional goals are augmented by my academic goals of applying myself to every possible pillar of learning to acquire as much information as possible, and being awarded this scholarship will no doubt assist me in my journey towards my dreams.