

My passion for culture was inspired by my international upbringing, and cultivate by my educational and professional experiences. I am the product of my Iranian and Puerto Rican mother and Italian-American father. Though I was born in Texas in the United States, I lived for four years in Norway before returning to the states and making a home in New Jersey. As an undergraduate at Princeton University I completed a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Literature and Culture with certificates in Urban, Latin American, and African American Studies. My thesis was focused on patterns of migration in the Caribbean, as well as how forms of popular culture can forge communities for ethnic minorities and combat discrimination. After graduating from Princeton in 2012, I moved to the Dominican Republic to become a teacher.

In the Dominican Republic, I dedicated my teaching career to using language, history, and geography, as a way of creating cross-cultural understanding. I taught English at the University level for one year, and then Geography and Mathematics at a bilingual middle school. I addressed issues of immigration, race, nationalism, and xenophobia in order to cultivate values of tolerance and compassion among my students. I created a theatrical performance for my Dominican and Haitian students to promote religious understanding in their communities. I also worked with the Council on International Education Exchange to give intercultural communication training sessions and prepare international students who were volunteering in the Dominican Republic.

During my fourth year in the Dominican Republic, I moved outside of the classroom and into the nonprofit sector, working for The Dominican Republic Education and Mentoring Project. I worked as a teacher trainer and curriculum designer, where I continued to give cross-cultural training to over sixty international educators. As a supervisor, I empowered local Dominican teachers to use new teaching methods and design units of study around Human Rights and equality. Outside of work, I also forged meaningful relationships with friends from England, Wales, France, Italy, Serbia, Turkey, Spain, Colombia, Venezuela, and Argentina, just to name a few.

I am a member of Queens' College and am pursuing a Masters of Philosophy in Education, Globalisation, and International Development. I will continue my research focusing on empowering immigrants and refugees. I am genuinely passionate about promoting cultural understanding and if elected as International Officer for the Graduate Union I plan to organize conversations, language tables, and other social events. Some of my ideas include international music and dance socials and potlucks where people can share national dishes of their countries. I will also encourage individuals and ethnic communities of Cambridge to share their own traditions and celebrations by organizing events and inviting others. I hope to organize events that will allow the international community to also learn about our host country of England, as well as Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. I hope to serve as a representative of the international community, but also to make sure that all students, internationals and U.K. nationals alike, have their voices heard.