

**Alexis Arsenault**

**Law School Application Personal Statement**

My second semester of sophomore year at Westerly High School began on January 22, 2008. I admit, it's an obscure event to remember nearly half a lifetime later, but it's a day I won't soon forget.

A meek 15-year-old, I chose to take World Affairs as my elective that semester, intrigued by the idea of a course dedicated to studying current events around the globe. The semester started on January 22, 2008 – the 35-year anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision – which became our first topic of discussion in the course. While I had always loved learning about history, government and politics, that day was the first time I was truly able to comprehend the gravity of a court ruling, the significance of legal precedent and the power of social justice movements.

In the following days, we discussed the coming election, delving into candidate agendas and debate topics including the controversial, if not unimaginable, concepts of same-sex marriage legalization and national access to affordable health care. The week after, we watched gut-wrenching documentaries on human trafficking and child soldiers, and we discussed the complexities of diplomacy and international affairs with regard to humanitarian crises.

In a matter of days, my eyes had been opened and my intellectual curiosity had been set on fire. I'd discovered the thrill of heated, informed debate, developed an overwhelming thirst for knowledge, and unleashed a burning passion for social justice, human rights and global affairs. Before long, I joined my school's Model United Nations, dedicated my senior thesis to a

campaign to destigmatize AIDS, and founded a local chapter of Friends of Chikumbuso, a grassroots project based in Ng'ombe, Zambia that provides educational, career and community-building opportunities for vulnerable women and children.

Hoping to pursue a career in global service, I attended American University in Washington, DC, where I learned from distinguished professors, rigorous coursework and the capital city itself. I further explored my interest in activism through nonprofit internships dedicated to important causes including women's health, economic justice, children's literacy and global equality. Additionally, as a part of a Community-Based Learning course, my colleagues and I dedicated our final undergraduate semester to volunteering for a nonprofit that helps injured veterans and their caregivers during their difficult recovery and rehabilitation process.

Upon graduation, I moved to New York City in hopes of continuing my work with nonprofits, and I became Marketing and Research Associate for New York Nonprofit Media, a recently re-launched publication dedicated to news in the nonprofit world. Within one year, I was promoted and eventually named Events Manager of its parent company, City & State NY. As part of a small but growing team at the political media company, I have since organized hundreds of policy forums, nonprofit conferences, networking receptions, political debates and other events addressing the most pressing political, economic and societal issues New Yorkers face. City & State NY has also given me the opportunity to connect with, and learn from, prominent policymakers, advocates and industry experts. Most recently, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, my team transitioned from holding weekly in-person events to developing

a webinar series with high-level government leaders addressing the new challenges New Yorkers face during these difficult times.

Much has changed in the world since January 2008, but my passion for social justice has never wavered. Pursuing a legal career would give me an incredible opportunity to advocate for marginalized and vulnerable populations and affect change in social policies in the public interest.

At this point in my life, I feel primed for the challenge and privilege of pursuing a law degree, and I believe this prestigious program would offer me the opportunity to thrive. My undergraduate education has provided me with a strong backbone in academics. My professional endeavors have given me real-life experience to see the big picture. My long-held interest in current events and passion for social justice has provided me with immense determination. My academic and professional backgrounds combined with my interests and natural curiosity have led me to this very moment where I am ready and excited to take on the challenge of law school.