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CHID 101
Values Assessment
April 11, 2023

- What topics are you most curious and passionate about studying?

I'm highly curious about social entrepreneurship, hydrology, and glaciology especially in terms of an engineering-based expansion for sustainability and community (ecological and societal).

- What values are you trying to address by being at the University of Washington in general and the Comparative History of Ideas program in particular?

I aim to address community oriented, sustainable engineering and design. Either on a micro or macro scale, I want to explore novel applications/ solutions to community-based problems. However, I want to emphasize that community is not limited to mine or someone I share an identity with, and it is also not limited to anthropomorphic terms. Communities relate across species.

To expand, working with The Community Boat Project, I learned the impact of human-centered design for disadvantaged members of our ever-growing community back in my Straits-adjacent hometown. We designed and constructed tiny homes out of recycled materials for displaced or underserved members— creating affordable housing, primarily, for agricultural workers, as well as senior residents and other unhoused citizens. I worked with people who wanted to submerge themselves in the task fully— hippies, ex-astrophysicists, car mechanics, wooden boat builders, artists, and the occasional gungho kid who walked into a world of compassion, creation, and enthusiasm (yours truly). We'd examine the needs of the individual or family and adjust the design process from there— add porch swings for an Islanders' kids, extra

storage for Farmers Market artisans, collaborative murals with our stakeholders (or their input) for a personal touch, and universal, accessible design for people regardless of age, disability, culture, or other factors. But the humanity, the connection, and the open line of communication with whom we were aiming to impact was perhaps the highlight of how much I hope to grow in my journey as an engineer and as a global citizen. The houses became homes, and the stakeholders became people.

A priority of empathy based change making. That's what I want to continue to explore with the Comparative history of ideas major.

In terms of ecological exploration and community, my hometown has been facing rapid declines in ecological health as a result of anthropogenic climate change. We face issues of overfishing, algae blooms, and reproductive failure of our Southern Residents due to starvation and exposure to PCBs. However, already I've begun to see the power in collective, collegial changemaking for Salmon and ecological restoration. 4 summers ago, I witnessed a groundbreaking collaboration between The Jamestown S'Klallam, Port Gamble S'Klallam, and Lower Elwha Klallam Tribes, WSDOT, the US Navy, and the North Olympic Salmon Coalition for the re-establishment of the open waterway in Kilisnoe Harbor. In just 2 months, the algae blooms, the acidification of our shellfish, and the falling of our Salmon ceased. Next, we marveled as a new movement for entirely carbon neutral or negative agricultural efforts went into place. Our neighbors cultivated their own kelp, seaweed, and algae farms to produce food, fertilizer, and more. Meanwhile, local mariculture of oysters inspired apprenticeships and community workshops on aiding carbon sequestration. Firsthand, I was fortunate enough to see and participate in multi-perspective problem solving towards a greater goal. And it's been magic.

These are the kinds of values and environments that I hope to expand on in my academic and experiential educational career here.