



Friday, January 14, 2022

City of Olympia Social Justice and Equity Commission Application

Advisory committees are a structured way for community members to share their opinions and points of view, study issues, and develop recommendations in a focused small group to the Olympia City Council.

Commissioners will be tasked with aligning the Commission work plan to elevate the voices, perspectives, and needs of marginalized community members; mediation and investigation of discrimination and harassment complaints; studying issues; hearing public testimony; independent research; and reviewing staff reports and recommendations. The Commission will also prepare, discuss, put together and forward well-developed recommendations to the City Council.

Appointment to the Commission requires living or working within Olympia City limits.

The City of Olympia values participation from all perspectives and life experiences and looks for equity and inclusion in advisory commission appointments. The Olympia City Council's General Government Committee recommends appointments to the full Council. Recommendations are made following review of applications and interviews of qualified candidates.

To reduce barriers to community member participation the City offers stipends of \$25 per meeting attended to advisory commission members. Members who certify as low income are eligible to receive stipends of \$50 per meeting attended. Advisory commission members may waive the stipend upon request.

The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources. The City can provide reasonable accommodation for anyone who needs it to participate fully in the commission.

For questions, please contact Susan Grisham, Assistant to the City Manager, 360.753.8244, sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us

Name

Genevieve Chan

Appointment to the Commission requires living or working within Olympia City limits. Do you:

Live in Olympia

Work in Olympia

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Home Address

[REDACTED]

Work Address

[REDACTED]

Select the neighborhood where you live or work (whichever is applicable):

Other

If you choose other please write in the neighborhood here: SE Boulevard



View a larger, zoomable map here:

https://www.olympiawa.gov/community/neighborhood_associations/index.php

Primary Phone Number



Interests & Experiences

Please keep answers concise and informative. You are introducing yourself to the Olympia City Council and sharing with them why you are interested in being considered for appointment. You may attach a resume.

Why are you interested in serving on the Social Justice and Equity Commission?

As a concerned citizen, differently abled person of color, and parent of two elementary aged children, I'm vested in developing a community that believes in advocating for equitable treatment of all. In my current position at Saint Martin's, as Vice President of Marketing and Communications, I've been working with students, staff and leadership to better understand DEI issues and bring everyone to the table.

What is your understanding of, or experience in, issues related to social justice, human rights, racial and/or other forms of discrimination?

Over the past two years, as part of the leadership team at Saint Martin's, we've been heading equity challenges, organizing campus-wide discussions, and engaging in such recent DEI literature including books by Ibram Kendi, Ijeoma Oluo, Heather McGhee, and currently Robert Livingston. As a minority-serving institution with more than 50% of our student body composed of students identifying as ethnically diverse, these issues are at the forefront of what we do: how to better serve our students, academically, emotionally, financially and vocationally.

What lived experiences or skill sets would you bring to the Commission?

I was born with a congenital absence of my right arm and am a first generation Asian American born to immigrant Filipino parents to the US in the 1960s. While I identify with several groups that may be considered marginalized or target, I also know I have been fortunate and have experienced much privilege in terms of my education, professional access and cis gender identity. As a communicator, I've also made it my mission to understand and build understanding. I believe my work in nonprofits, educational institutes and business organizations will help bring a wide lens to how DEI issues can and should be addressed and championed across all sectors. And how sectors need to work together to bring DEI initiatives to fruition.

Describe a time when you experienced a personal bias and how you worked through that bias; or describe a time when you worked with someone with different viewpoints than yours and how you worked through those differences?

There have been many times in the workforce where people have treated my prosthetic arm as a novelty or curiosity and/or it has been the subject of questions regarding my ability or capacity to do work. While in the past I use to try to camouflage my disability so as not to invite questions, I have

since learned the importance of leaning into sharing who I am in a positive, kind way and share why such questions are hurtful or not helpful in assessing someone's ability. I have built trust this way.

Describe what a "just and equitable Olympia for all people" looks or feels like to you and how would you include all marginalized people into this vision.

I don't think there will ever be a final state. I think if we can build a community that understands this is a never ending dialogue and that we are learning, giving each other space to be heard and to learn, that will be a huge commitment to the DEI journey. I would hope we would create for everyone in our community a sense that they feel safe, that they can put forward their point of view, and they are a much needed part of the solution.

Appointment to the Commission will require your attendance at evening meetings, and other types of work (reading, meeting preparation etc.). How many hours per month are you willing to commit as a volunteer?

I could commit 5-10 hours a month depending on the work needed.

Thank you for your interest in serving on a the City of Olympia Social Justice and Equity Commission!