

Theresa Madrid, Graduate Student, Public Health Genetics, University of Washington

Interviewer: What were your interests in High School that led you to do Biology in college?

TM: Well I was initially interested in forensic science, so I was really interested in forensics, pathology, and umm, crime scene investigations, all those things that are really popular right now, umm I was really interested in those things, and so I pursued Science in High School and then again in College. But at some point, I decided forensics was not the ideal job for me, so I kind of stayed in Science but not in forensics.

Interviewer: Is there any certain experiences that led to your interest in this degree besides school?

TM: Well I guess I would say that, umm, when I was younger, I would read a lot. So, I read a lot of books my aunt would give me and for some reason, I think just at some point in time, I read a lot of books about forensics, because that is what she was reading, and those are the books she would give me, and so I became really interested in forensics at that time, but then as I became more and more familiar with science and what I could do in science, my interests changed. I think reading really got me interested in Science in the beginning.

Interviewer: Do you have any personal connections with what you do?

TM: Yeah, so like right now, a lot of my work is focused around, umm, students, and how students learn about Genetics, and I'm really interested in students who are learning Genetics, particularly in Health Sciences, and so, for me, it is really important to have minorities in the Sciences because we often go into fields and learn things like ask questions about things that are really important to us. So, umm, as a minority, my community, my Hispanic community is really important to me, and their health is really important to me, so having more minorities in health fields and doing Genetics Research, umm, on diseases that affect minorities and that affect Hispanic people is really important, and so yeah, I think it is really important to have more students in Genetics learning about diseases that affect people that I can identify with.

Interviewer: Do you have any examples you can think of, off the top of your head, that show how both you work with your students but also diseases within your community, that affect your community or are connected with your community?

TM: Yeah, it definitely effects my community because, umm, possibly in the future more minorities in the health fields will equate better health in the community, maybe that would happen but hopefully it will, but it also will mean that when more minorities are in science and are looking at diseases that affect looking at minority health, that maybe will decrease their disparity, so less minorities will be unhealthy or they'll get better care, or they'll have better options for medications, or cancer treatments.

