

For as long as I can remember, I've always wanted to help others. My life has been filled with many adverse experiences and challenges which, at times, have made it difficult to carry on, but my strong desire to be a light in the lives of others has inspired me not to give up. Early in my life, my parents instilled a vigorous sense of service and empathy within me. This has been a driving factor in my peregrination to a lifetime of helping others. I initially chose to do this through the field of Social Work and began studying to earn my Bachelor of Science in Social Work at Longwood University in August 2018. Choosing to pursue my undergraduate degree in Social Work at Longwood was surely one of the best decisions I have ever made. The small class sizes, countless opportunities, and personal relationships with staff made Longwood the perfect home for me to grow as both a student and an individual. The education, guidance, and field experiences I gained through the Social Work program have provided me with the foundational knowledge and values I desired to prepare me for the next phase of my academic journey, as well as my future career as a counselor.

I believe many of my preexisting values, as well as the Social Work values that I have studied and embodied over the last four years, align with the core values of the counseling profession. In everything I do, I strive to live my life with the utmost respect for the inherent dignity and worth that all humans hold. I have found that the people who have experienced the most trauma and pain in their lives can sometimes be the most challenging individuals to work with. I have always gravitated towards clients and individuals who have survived significant adversity, those who are too often pushed away by society and are seen as being "too far gone." I see within them hope and an opportunity to live a fulfilling and valuable life. I also hold the

values of partnership, client autonomy, personal integrity, and social justice highly as I walk through life and ultimately as I begin my career.

As a counselor, I will strive to promote the safety and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through developing and maintaining positive and healthy relationships with my clients that emphasize the values of honesty, empathy, and trustworthiness. I hope to achieve this by providing my clients with a semi-structured, safe environment that promotes healing, openness, and overall growth. I hope to work together with my clients to support their needs and provide them with valuable resources that they may need to encourage healing and success within their overall lives. I am unsure about a lot of things in my life, but I know with no uncertainty that I was put on this earth to help people, and as long as I am still here that is what I am going to do.