

## **Candidate Statement**

I am Siwei and I major in Spanish and Data Science at City College of San Francisco. I believe I have abundant experience and skills that would be well suited for the Region Vice Chair role at SSCCC. As an international student, I am excited by SSCCC'S commitment to designing with the students in mind and feel this is a great way to help schools create a more inclusive, engaging, encouraging and supportive learning environment.

Before serving as the secretary of the Associated Student Council, I often felt rejected and ignored when I asked for help as an international student. The ignorance and exclusion discouraged me, but witnessing the efforts of council members gave me courage to stand up and help all my fellow students more regardless of their status( non-credit, international, part-time or continuing students) as well as myself. Running for the Region Vice Chair is a perfect opportunity to build a better learning environment where no students feel marginalized or disconnected and where prompt support and resources are provided, regardless of students' identities.

I am determined to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment in community colleges. To ensure that students' full potential and goals at community colleges can be achieved, we need to build campuses free from suffering from judgements. As an instructor at the University of Kansas, I worked with students on campus and high school students through hybrid and interactive teaching methods. Working in highly diverse classrooms helped me to appreciate various stories, backgrounds and struggles experienced by students and I gained a broader perspective which allows me to better understand how to help students to reach their individual educational goals. As a Region Vice Chair, I would work hard to ensure that students have a strong voice in the design process. Unfortunately, some groups of students feel marginalized and underrepresented in decision making. When I volunteered with Project Shine, I knew it is my responsibility to connect non-credit students with academic resources, support and financial help. I was very proud to stand up and speak for these groups to ensure they are taken care of and feel involved in campus life. When I advocated for Special Education in the rural areas in China, I learned that many people have very low expectations of students with disabilities, they believed the students could not achieve high grades and live fulfilling lives. Because of this, the students were under-resourced and often shut off from learning many subjects. By recruiting other students from different majors to volunteer teaching students with disabilities to subjects they had never encountered, the students flourished and made wonderful achievements that they were very proud of. This is an ongoing program called "volunteer for all" after our leadership. It's a club started by students under the foreign language department at Hunan Institute of Science and Technology which is located in Yueyang, Hunan Province. Through this advocacy, more resources are accessible to these schools we worked with.

I am also committed to create a more accessible resource and support platform to all students who should be encouraged to have higher educational expectations. Later on, after working in the states for 4 years I decided to make a career change, which brought me to San Francisco, where I thought it is a city model for other cities in many regards. By being told that certain resources are not set for international students and by being ignored and pushed away, I realized there are much more improvements that could be done and I am committed to make that change. My understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion gets more comprehensive and this experience taught me that many students are still struggling and more resources should be available to them when needed. When it comes to making policies to best suit students' need and satisfaction, I believe using data and evidence is the best way to gain the fullest picture of the situation. However, no school system is perfect. I have a few bad experiences and know that some students can feel marginalized by these experiences. But the key point is "less blame and more solutions"

based on my logistic thinking. By well applying my multitasking skills, organizational skills and record keeping skills to my secretary role, I exhibit excellent performance in facilitating meetings and providing solid background information for enhancing discussion. I am also committed to help the schools to make positive changes and have some fruitful and beneficial results for students. As a recorder and observer, not only do I collect and maintain the records of each meeting and create my own tracking system to navigate minutes and relevant documents in an efficient way, but also reflect and review on potential actions and solutions which might help when exposed to difficulties. Based on my experience both as teacher and student in the states, I believe teamwork and collaboration could be done in the virtual environment if we aim to strengthen bonds, deepen conversations and sharpen our soft skills to contribute to achieve the same goals.

I believe there is still work for us to do to stop these judgements based on social identities and other utterances. I am committed to make a more friendly, diverse and inclusive environment for students from different backgrounds to feel safe and happy to learn. We should all be responsible to help all students to reach their full potential in their education.