

## **Personal Statement #2 (Optional Essay)**

There are several goals that I hope to achieve upon successfully completing my JD. After completing a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree, supplemented by four years of international experience between the two, I have developed a refined set of personal, academic and professional goals. However, I feel that achieving these goals will be more effectively facilitated using the tools acquired through a legal education. Essentially, I know what I want to do but am unable to take on the desired roles with my current qualifications. A JD will rectify this by providing me with invaluable tools, knowledge and experience integral to the achievement of my professional aims outlined below.

Throughout my graduate studies, I further developed my existing interest in women's issues and feminism. Through in-depth research on women's rights, girl's education, and related issues both in local and global contexts I found the niche where I now hope to carve out a legal career for myself. My main interest is in the field of sexual and reproductive health rights within the context of international human rights and law. I ideally wish to pursue course and clinic work through the University of Toronto's International Human Rights Program as well as participate in the IHRP internship opportunities overseas in order to gain the skills and experience necessary to pursue a career in the field.

I have a specific interest in exploring access to safe and legal abortion in sub-Saharan Africa as well as investigating the impact of reproductive health-related legislation on local communities and on health outcomes. I feel strongly that an international human rights internship abroad as a part of my JD education would provide me with an unparalleled opportunity to gain hands-on research, advocacy and other legal experience that would undoubtedly serve me throughout my legal career.

I have specific career interest in getting involved with the work of the Center for Reproductive Rights in New York, NY (for whose board Professor Rebecca Cook serves as Chair) and/or related organizations. I am thrilled at the prospect of having the opportunity to work with and learn from Professor Cook at the University of Toronto, specifically through the International Human Rights Program.

In fact, I consider much of her research and work as major contributing factors that motivated me to pursue my particular field of interest in Law. While I do hope to gain substantial international practical experience both while pursuing my JD and in my legal career, I would also like to contribute to the legal community, particularly in the domain of women's rights, at home in Canada. Both during my studies and upon completion of my JD I hope to be involved

in local public interest work and advocating for women's rights, immigrant and refugee rights, etc.

One example of a Toronto-based organization that I am keen to work with is the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). This sort of context is ideal to me as it conducts both domestic and international work in the field of women's rights. As an avid academic writer I am also keen to make contributions to the University's student journals, particularly the U of T Journal of Law and Equality, as well as to continue publishing legal pieces upon graduation. The Faculty of Law's Women's Human Rights Resources Programme also represents a significant draw for me to the program and would surely provide me with key tools down the line in the field I hope to work in.

I am extremely excited about the opportunity to pursue my JD and at the University of Toronto in particular. The Faculty of Law's specific resources, programs, clinics, and internships fit perfectly with what I hope to get out of a legal education and the work of several faculty members resonates deeply with my own personal interests and career goals. I would be humbled and thrilled to work with not only the school's prestigious faculty but also its diverse student body. I believe that the privilege of attending law school and pursuing a legal career will best allow me to share my vision of justice with others and advocate for those whose voices are not heard.