

MAYA FIRSTYEAR

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STATEMENT OF INTEREST

In applying for a summer internship with the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service in Jakarta, my objectives are to gain professional experience in international commercial affairs and to enhance my graduate studies. I am currently a first-year Master in Public Affairs (MPA) degree candidate at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, where I will return in the fall to complete my degree. My study emphasis is East Asia, and I am interested in how U.S. commercial interests affect the development of countries in that region.

My interest in international affairs, and more specifically East Asian development, stems from my childhood experiences in the Philippines where I lived for nine years. Even after immigrating to the United States, my growing interest in the Philippines led me to study political science, economics, and international affairs from the East Asian perspective as an undergraduate at Brown University. I spent my junior year at the London School of Economics focusing on international political economies and international organizations such as ASEAN.

After graduation, I spent two years as a financial analyst in the Bank Supervision Group of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. A significant portion of my work focused on the financial accounting standards in countries in Asia, Latin America, and Europe, which are critical for evaluating the strength of banking organizations. As a financial analyst, I also acquired in-depth knowledge of financial intermediation, which often plays a critical role in the economic development of many countries and is an arena where developed and developing countries frequently interact.

I decided to pursue an MPA degree at the Woodrow Wilson School to acquire the necessary analytical tools for effective policy-making. The curriculum emphasizes the political, economic, and quantitative analysis skills essential for making sound policy decisions. I believe my current coursework in microeconomics and statistics further enhances my preparation for an internship with the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service. In the spring, I will be taking a course in contemporary political economies in East Asia, which will be particularly useful in preparing me for this internship.

I believe that working for the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service will give me the opportunity to gain unique insights into the formulation and implementation of U.S. commercial policy in East Asia. My interest in Indonesia and U.S.-Indonesian commercial relations makes the Jakarta internship most appealing. I am eager to contribute to efforts to expand U.S. commercial interests in Indonesia.