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As a first-generation law student from a low-income, environmentally disadvantaged community, I came to law school to pursue a career in environmental and energy law. Growing up along the Mississippi River, nitrate runoff and soil erosion from agricultural production regularly contaminated local waterways, raising constant concerns about safe drinking water. Emissions from local factories further burdened public health and well-being. Experiencing environmental harms firsthand and seeing their disproportionate impact on my community shaped my passion for environmental justice and ultimately led me to law school to address systemic environmental inequities.

Prior to law school, I worked in legislative and policy roles to support the development and implementation of environmental legislation. As a legislative clerk in the Iowa House of Representatives, I assisted in researching and drafting legislation addressing agricultural runoff, wetland conservation, and clean energy incentives. Later, I worked in the U.S. Senate following the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Working on environmental policy at this critical moment showed me how law and policy can significantly improve the lives of communities like the one I grew up in. I helped translate complex statutory provisions from the IRA into accessible guidance for Midwesterners navigating grants and tax credits. I saw how comprehensive climate and clean energy investments could lower energy costs, create jobs, and protect our environment. As a clean energy policy associate, I worked directly with rural communities to draft wind and solar ordinances and authored policy resources, including white papers and siting toolkits. Through this work, I witnessed the transformative effect that clean energy development and IRA grants had on rural communities.

Now, as a law student, I am continuing to build the knowledge and experience necessary to contribute meaningfully to environmental law and the communities I seek to serve. As a student attorney for the Acequia Assistance Project, I am beginning to apply my legal skills to create meaningful and lasting change. I work directly with low-income farmers to write bylaws to legally protect historical local customs of water appropriation, as clean water becomes an increasingly scarce resource. Additionally, I am eagerly looking forward to upcoming internships with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Solicitor's Office and the Colorado Attorney General's Natural Resources and Environment Section, to further my knowledge and skills in environmental law.

My interest in environmental law began with my lived experience in an environmentally disadvantaged community and has grown into a deep commitment through my professional work. I plan to work in public interest environmental law, crafting, implementing, and enforcing legal frameworks that protect the environment, advance energy efficiency, and ensure marginalized communities are included in decision-making. I aim to strengthen the legal frameworks that govern our land, water, and energy systems while ensuring they are durable, science-based, and equitably enforced. Just as the Inflation Reduction Act