

Alisha Romano  
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### Personal Statement

My desire to become a professor was solidified when I was given the opportunity to work with the Japanese international students. I was asked if I would enjoy being a part of a group of students who would work with the Japanese students to aid in their adaptation, to not only English, but also to the culture of California. I agreed to the program more because I wanted my Japanese to get better, especially my speaking, but that was not what kept me interested in the program as the semester got more chaotic and demanding. I stayed with meeting my counterpart twice a week because being able to read her homework and answer her questions was too enjoyable. I looked forward to every Wednesday and Friday when we would go to Starbucks and I could discuss her assignments with her; it became even greater when as the semester dragged on, her English started becoming more fluent and her writing errors became minimal. I relished in being able to help her, even the smallest bit with her work, and it no longer became about me being able to perfect my Japanese, it became what can I do to help her understand this better.

My adoration of these meetings was also because language is the one thing that truly bridges everyone. Being able to speak a different language and communicate with someone in the language they feel most comfortable in allows you to see the world through their eyes. I have always believed that things are lost in translation and that the only way to really understand another human's world-view is through understanding their language. I chose the Japanese Language and Culture department because I knew that I wanted to be a part of a program that would challenge me to see the world through someone else's eyes and would give me the opportunity to communicate with people in their own language that I previously would have

never been able to do. Similarly, California State Monterey Bay has given me the opportunity to learn about languages and cultures that I would not have been able to learn in many other universities. The large international student population has also allowed me to encounter cultures beyond even the one that I am studying. This exposure to so many different languages and cultures has created the desire for me to go to graduate school and earn my PHD. I hope to use this degree to become a professor at a university with a diverse student body. I want to be an aid to people who may not have had exposure to the array of diversity in the world and show them the magic of language and how it really changes everything.