



May 6, 2019

California City Management Foundation  
The Wes McClure Scholarship Program Committee  
PO Box 221537, Newhall, CA 91322

Dear CCMF Scholarship Committee:

My name is Grace Yoon-Taylor and I am a second-year M.P.A student at California State University Fullerton (CSUF). I am pleased to submit my application for the Wes McCure Scholarship Program to the California City Management Foundation, as I am in the process of making a career transition from the nonprofit sector to dedicate myself to a career in local government.

I hold a B.A. in Sociology with honors from Ewha Woman's University and an M.A. in Social Science from the University of Chicago and am pursuing an M.P.A. degree at CSUF. To date, I have completed 18 credits with a current GPA of 4.0 and have been actively involved with on-campus and alumni activities with the MPA program. I am also a member of the Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society as well as a proud recipient of the Lawson Public Service Internship scholarship as well as the Alan Saltzstein Excellence Scholarship Award. Additionally, I am a student member of the Municipal Management Association of Southern California (MMASC) and International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

I am currently interning at the City of Huntington Beach, City Manager's Office, assisting and reporting directly to Antonia Graham, Assistant to the City Manager for the past ten months. My experience in the dynamic and fast-paced environment of the City Manager's Office has been an eye-opening and valuable learning opportunity. I hope that this application will demonstrate my desire to pursue my career in local government and continue serving the public, particularly the disadvantaged.

Please feel free to contact me at 917-940-8485 (cell) or [graceyoontaylor@csu.fullerton.edu](mailto:graceyoontaylor@csu.fullerton.edu) (email) should you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Grace Yoon-Taylor

Personal Essay – Why I am Committed to A Career in Public Service  
**Grace Yoon-Taylor**

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My motivation to pursue a career in public service comes from my childhood and my own immigration struggles. I was born and raised on a small island town in South Korea by a community of strong women entrepreneurs; just like my grandmother, my mother was a survivor of domestic violence. Driven by a need to survive and raise two young children, she started a small business selling vegetables and handmade *kimchi* and would sleep only 4-5 hours a day; my earliest memories include helping her sell locally grown vegetables after school and during holidays. She never stopped learning, even after being diagnosed with lupus and being forced by her to deteriorating health to to close her business.

Growing up, my mother was very rarely available to help with schoolwork or anything else but she taught me her can-do attitude, strong work ethic, and entrepreneurial spirit. At the same time, I remember being angry and frustrated about the lack of governmental and systemic support for those affected by the vicious cycle of domestic violence and poverty. These experiences helped steer me towards being a social entrepreneur and public administrator dedicated to helping women find their voices and contribute towards a more equal and just world.

I have dedicated all my efforts and energy towards empowering underserved communities for the past 13 years, particularly for women and children. By working at three primarily social service and advocacy nonprofit organizations in Chicago and in New York, I gained knowledge and valuable experience in all aspects of agency administration, finance and budgeting, fundraising, as well as community outreach, board support, and constituent services. I have also served on various non-profit boards and city committees and previously participated in the grant-making process for a foundation. These experiences have provided me with tremendous opportunities to work with and manage diverse sets of people and expose myself to different areas of nonprofit management and public administration.

Most recently, I served as the Executive Director of the Korean American Family Service Center (KAFSC) in New York City for the past 7 years. During my tenure, I oversaw the growth of the center's annual operating budget to \$2 million, increasing assets ten-fold while tripling staff size to 54. Since we were a relatively small nonprofit with limited resources, as Executive Director I had to wear different hats and I learn first-hand all aspects of agency management, fundraising, community outreach and administration. Working closely with a junior level bookkeeper, I was heavily involved with budgeting, finances, and staff allocation as well as human resources. I learned how critical administration and finance were in terms of the healthy and effective operation of the organization, and how I became even more eager to obtain more skill and knowledge in this area.

My interest in public finance was further increased when I worked with the local city government in New York City to seek a \$1,000,000 in capital funding towards the construction

of an emergency shelter. Navigating New York City's multi-billion annual budgeting process proved to be very complex, especially for a small community-based organization like KAFSC, where we lacked the knowledge and experience necessary to approach the various and often independent parts of the city government. In the end, with the assistance of the Budget Director of the Queens Borough President's Office, we were able to secure the first round of funding in the amount of \$700,000 towards our project. I learned that budget allocation was one way of understanding the policy priorities of government. After 9+ years of working directly with local, state and federal governments, I had developed an interest in working in the government sector and expanding my skill set and experience in public finance.

After relocating to Southern California with my family, I wanted to leverage my nonprofit experience and desire to serve others into a meaningful position in the public sector. During this career and life transition, my journey with the M.P.A. program at California State University, Fullerton has broadened my horizons through the hands-on mentorship and instruction of my professors and wealth of in-class learning. The more I learn about the public sector and tremendous challenges that local and state governments face today, the more motivated and committed I have become to the field of public administration and city governments.

In August 2018, I started an internship with the City of Huntington Beach, City Manager's Office and have been involved with several research and analysis projects as well as sustainability projects while providing administrative support directly to the Assistant to the City Manager. When I assisted the City's efforts to generate community and business support towards its plan to build a homeless shelter, I witnessed firsthand tremendous challenges facing the City in addressing the issue of homelessness. The experience of seeing the collective efforts from the elected and public administrators only convinced me further to pursue my career in local government.

Everyday life also brings new challenges, requiring that I balance my duties as a first-generation immigrant mother of a young child, as a full-time graduate student, and as an intern at the City of Huntington Beach with a 4 days-per-week work schedule. But I accept these challenges gratefully as I am deeply committed to my career development in public service. The totality of my experiences is what differentiates me and has shaped my passion for the public sector and taking a holistic approach to problem solving and administration. In the future, I hope to find a place for myself at the decision-making table – where I can then continue to be a voice for those who are underrepresented and underserved.

April 29, 2019

California City Management Foundation  
The Wes McClure Scholarship Program Committee  
PO Box 221537, Newhall, CA 91322

To the Wes McClure Scholarship Program Committee,

I am writing with my strongest possible recommendation for Grace Yoon-Taylor as 2019 recipient of the Wes McClure Scholarship. I have known Ms. Yoon-Taylor for nearly two years, since she came to speak with me about applying for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at California State University, Fullerton. In her first semester, she was enrolled in my Foundations of Public Administration course, where I got to see what a truly exceptional student she was. In class, Ms. Yoon-Taylor makes insightful comments, asks thoughtful questions, and completes excellent written work; importantly, she displays an impressive attention to detail. Perhaps this is less surprising because Ms. Yoon-Taylor came to Orange County with over a decade of work in the nonprofit sector in New York and Chicago. After a family move to California, she made the decision to move into local government, hence her enrollment in the MPA program.

Without local government experience, Ms. Yoon-Taylor knew that she would need an internship to get her foot in the door, thus in fall 2018 she enrolled in my public administration internship class. I recommended that she apply for an unpaid internship in Huntington Beach because I knew that she would benefit from the mentorship of those working in the City Manager's office, and that she would be of great value to the City. Not surprisingly, that position quickly turned into a highly coveted, paid internship in Huntington Beach.

During that same semester Ms. Yoon-Taylor's academic work was awarded in the form of two MPA scholarships. First, the Lawson Internship in Public Service, awarded on a competitive basis to MPA students enrolled in the internship class. Second, the Alan Saltzstein Excellence Award, another competitive award which honors an exceptional student each semester early in his/her MPA program to recognize and encourage continued success.

Ms. Yoon-Taylor is highly motivated, very bright, works well with others, and is well liked by fellow MPA students and faculty. Further, she is an active participant in the MPA program—having gotten involved with every opportunity that has come before her. In addition to winning several of our program awards, as noted, she has attended events including a small-group dinner with our 2018 City Manager-in-Residence (Jim Sadro, City Manager of La Habra), a Staff Report Writing Workshop (with

Tammy LeTourneau, Asst. City Manager of Costa Mesa), a Happy Hour hosted by the Orange County City Manager Association and a day-long series of career panels with our MPA alumni. She has also joined several professional organizations, including MMASC and ICMA.

In a nutshell, Grace Yoon-Taylor is well positioned to make an important mark on local government in Orange County. Being awarded the 2019 Wes McClure Scholarship would be another excellent marker in what should prove to be an important career in public service.

It is clear that I think very highly of Grace Yoon-Taylor and expect very big things from her. If I may answer any additional questions you have about her, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Shelly Arsneault, Ph.D.  
Professor of Political Science  
Division of Politics, Administration, & Justice  
California State University, Fullerton  
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## CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

2000 MAIN STREET, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92648-2702

### OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER FRED A. WILSON

April 30, 2019

California City Management Foundation  
The Wes McClure Scholarship Program Committee  
PO Box 221537, Newhall, CA 91322

**Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Grace Yoon-Taylor**

Dear CCMF Scholarship Committee:

This letter is to recommend Grace Yoon-Taylor for the 2019 Wes McClure Scholarship Program. I have known Grace since August of 2018 when she began her internship under my supervision at the City of Huntington Beach. Grace holds a B.A. in Sociology with honors from Ewha Woman's University and an M.A. in Social Science from the University of Chicago and is currently pursuing an MPA from California State University Fullerton (CSUF). Grace is the rare student who combines diligence and intelligence with a personable demeanor that helps her excel at everything she does. Her perfect 4.0 GPA in her current graduate program is one testament of these qualities in application.

She has proved to be an invaluable asset to our office far exceeding my expectations. Grace started her role at the City first a Volunteer Intern in partnership with the CSUF MPA Program and within a few months advanced to become a paid Graduate Intern with the City Manager's Office. Grace has assisted me with various research projects and sustainability initiatives and taken responsibility for administering and coordinating our Rideshare program and Sustainable Business Certification program. In her first few weeks, Grace hit the ground running by updating program information and connecting with employees in various Departments. Based on a semester-long team project in conjunction with CSUF to review and revamp HR practices for the City, Grace played a key role in creating our new Management Assistant Program. This is one of our succession planning initiatives to grow our own leaders and recruit a pipeline of Master-level educated top talent. Her involvement was featured in both the front page of the CSUF news website and the Orange County Register. In addition, she took ownership of our grant application for the Keep America Beautiful grant that was awarded to our recycling program in our Public Works department.

Grace comes from a unique background, having worked in the nonprofit sector for over 14 years including serving as Executive Director for a community-based organization in New York City. She wore several hats inside and outside the organization and tackled difficult challenges with creative solutions. She understands the importance of teamwork and her skills in project management, communication, and grant research and writing have proven valuable and easily transferable to our

work. She thrives in a fast-paced collaborative environment of the City Manager's Office where she can roll up her sleeves and get things done and is highly adaptable to our ever-changing needs and priorities.

Working in local government, I run into a lot of people who are "passionate" about public policy/public administration/local government, etc., you have to be in this profession – it's a given...especially as we continue to work in a field with so much public distrust and disdain for public employees. Grace embodies all the qualities of a dedicated public servant. She has the highest work ethic and integrity, strives to be out-of-box thinker, looks at the big picture, and embodies the leadership qualities of a servant leader. Grace is not afraid of challenges and possesses a positive "can do" attitude while tackling all assignments with dedication, a sense of urgency, and a smile.

In my eighteen years in local government, I have never had such a humble and talented intern. Too often, I find that students in MPA programs or who have recently graduated believe that they are ready to be a City Manager or department head right away. This is not the case with Grace. Although she already has years of managerial and professional work experience under her belt, she is truly dedicated to serving the public and carries her duties with a desire to learn and contribute along with a deep sense of humility. She will have a long career in public service and I truly believe she will make an impact on any local community in which she serves.

For these reasons, I can wholeheartedly recommend Grace for the McClure Scholarship and for anything that she sets her mind to. Should you have any questions, please contact me at (714) 536-5537.

Sincerely,



Antonia Castro Graham, EMSL, MPA, CSM, Env-Sp  
Assistant to the City Manager/Energy and Sustainability Manager  
City of Huntington Beach

Adjunct Instructor – UCI, UCLA, Irvine Valley College, and CSUF

# GRACE YOON-TAYLOR

## PROFILE

Self-motivated, highly effective, and passionate nonprofit management expert who specializes in research, grant writing, community relations, fundraising, and special projects as well as developing innovative and sustainable initiatives for the organization she work for.

MPA student looking to leveraging her previous nonprofit and local government experience into a meaningful position in state, federal, and municipal governments in Southern California.

Expert in Asian American community issues. Bilingual advocate in English and Korean.

## CONTACT



917-940-8485



[graceyoon@gmail.com](mailto:graceyoon@gmail.com)



/graceyoontaylor



@GraceYoonTaylor

## EDUCATION

### Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.), California State University-Fullerton (CSUF)

Expected Graduate in Spring 2020

- Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society member (Current GPA: 4.0/4.0)
- Recipient of 2018 Alan Saltzstein Excellence Scholarship
- Recipient of 2018 Lawson Internship Scholarship in Public Service

### Master of Arts (M.A.), Social Science, University of Chicago

09/2003-08/2005

- Worked as Research Assistant at Survey Lab for an in-depth research project about food insecurity with Chicago Food Depository

### Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Sociology, Ewha Woman's University

03/1999-08/2003 (Seoul, South Korea)

- Magna Cum Laude Graduate. Recipient of Dean's List Scholarship
- Selected for one-year International Exchange Program at *Baldwin-Wallace University*, Berea, Ohio, U.S.A.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### City of Huntington Beach, Office of City Manager

**Graduate Intern** Huntington Beach, California 8/2018 – Present

- Assist the city's energy and sustainability programs and other city-wide projects initiated by the City Manager's Office.
- Lead Sustainable Business Certification Program with outreach and enroll businesses to California Green Business Network (CAGBN).
- Conduct a wide range of research and write reports that present and interpret data, and make and justify recommendations.
  - Supported the creation of Management Assistant Internship Program to develop a pipeline for future public leaders.
- Act as AQMD Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) for day-to-day management of the City's rideshare program.
- Write grants/reports and monitor grant-funded program expenses.
- Provide administrative assistance to Assistant to the City Manager as well as management team and committees.

### Independent Grant Writer/Consultant

Telecommute 10/2015 – Present

- Conduct the full range of activities required to prepare, write, and submit grant proposals to governmental and foundation sources.
- Supported Executive Director with key management areas and managed all aspects of grant research, writing, & contracts management.
- Secured a new capital improvement funding of over \$1.3M from the New York City and the State towards an emergency shelter as well as multi-year federal grants totaling \$1.2 M from U.S. Department of Justice.

### Korean American Family Service Center, Inc. (KAFSC)

**Executive Director** Queens, New York 09/2008–09/2015

- Administered a nonprofit agency including program development, HR/Budget/finance management, board support, facility and contracts management, and legal compliance.
- Supervised and managed staff of 54 in all program areas.
- Led a successful, unprecedented merger with another nonprofit agency, Rainbow Center of NY in 2014 and acquired a shelter property.
- Executed all the annual fundraising campaigns and special events. Tripled the operating budget to \$2.3+M and increased assets ten-fold.
- As key spokesperson for the agency, maintained positive image in the community and oversaw all aspects of communication, PR, and community outreach efforts including Annual Report, printed/digital newsletters, brochures, website, and promotional videos.

## AWARDS, SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS

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- Recipient of 2015 Medal of Outstanding Koreans Oversea Excellence Award from Prime Minister of South Korea
- Recipient of 2012 Community Leadership Award from New York City Councilman Peter Koo's Office (District 20)
- Completed Management & Supervision Certification Program, Support Center of Nonprofit Management, New York City
- Completed Executive Director Leadership Caucus Program at Community Resource Exchange (CRE), New York City
- Member, Korean International Women Network (KOWIN), an invitation-only leadership circle sponsored by the South Korean Government's Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Affairs
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher), SharePoint, *JD Edwards*, Adobe Acrobat Professional, Adobe Contribute, Adobe Forms Central, *DonorPerfect*, *Constant Contacts*, and basic knowledge in *Salesforce*, & *QuickBooks*
- Bilingual fluency in English and Korean

### HANA Center

**Development Director** Chicago, Illinois 01/2007-08/2008

- Planned and implemented annual fundraising strategies including special events for a nonprofit social service agency with annual budget of \$4M.
- Researched and wrote grants and managed government contracts.
- Recruited, trained, and supervised volunteers/interns for agency activities.
- Managed all aspects of agency-wide communications: cultivated media relationships, created and distributed marketing materials (website, e-newsletters, annual reports, brochures, and social media).
- Presented the agency to the public and enhanced relationships with the elected officials, the press, donors, volunteers, and businesses.

### KAN-WIN, Inc.

**Community Outreach Coordinator** Chicago, Illinois 08/2004-01/07

- Planned and conducted community outreach activities and educational workshops. Responsible for volunteer recruitment, training, and management.
- Coordinated key financial and computer literacy programs.
- Provided comprehensive direct services (crisis intervention, advocacy, case management and other support services) to crime victims of domestic violence and their children.
- Created a one-on-one mentoring program for children at risk.
- Fostered positive working relationships with law enforcement, schools, and social and legal service providers.

### University of Chicago

**Research Assistant** Chicago, Illinois 2004

- Developed course materials for advanced Korean language classes through Dept. of Eastern Asian Language at the University.

### Ewha Woman's University, Office of International Affairs

**Teaching Assistant** Seoul, South Korea 2001-2003

- Assisted professors and other foreign language instructors with administrative tasks.
- Provided various support to international students on campus.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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- Orange County Registrar of Voters  
*Bilingual Poll Worker* Irvine, CA 2018 - Present
- Korean American Family Services (KFAM)  
*Executive Coach* Los Angeles, CA 2018 - Present
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)  
*Member* California 2018 - Present
- Municipal Management Association of Southern California (MMASC)  
*Member* California 2018 - Present
- New York City Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence  
*Fatality Review Committee* New York 2012 - 2014
- National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP)  
*VP of Strategic Development* Chicago 2005 - 2009
- Chicago Foundation for Women  
*Silk Fund Leadership Council* Chicago 2007 - 2008
- Leadership Center for Asian Pacific Americans  
*Board of Directors* Chicago 2005 - 2007
- Chicago Korean Cultural Festival Planning Committee  
*Executive Secretary* Chicago 2006 - 2007