

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION



SNOHOMISH COUNTY
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 503
Everett, Washington 98201
(425) 388-3411
<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/2553>

Montes, Gricelda
2022-00442 PUBLIC ADVOCATE

Received: 8/14/22 12:35 PM
For Official Use Only:
QUAL: _____
DNO: _____
☐ Experience
☐ Training
☐ Other: _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION

POSITION TITLE: PUBLIC ADVOCATE	EXAM ID# : 2022-00442
NAME: (Last, First, Middle) Montes, Gricelda	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: N/A
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code) 6121 37th PL NE, Marysville, Washington 98270	EMAIL ADDRESS: Gmontes@uw.edu
HOME PHONE: 2063104135	
LEGAL RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UNITED STATES? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
What is your highest level of education? Bachelor's Degree	

PREFERENCES

ARE YOU WILLING TO RELOCATE? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe
WHAT TYPE OF JOB ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? Regular
TYPES OF WORK YOU WILL ACCEPT: Full Time
SHIFTS YOU WILL ACCEPT: Day, Evening, Weekends

EDUCATION

DATES: From: 9/2010 To: 6/2014	SCHOOL NAME: University of Washington	
LOCATION: (City, State/Province) Seattle, Washington	DID YOU GRADUATE? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	DEGREE RECEIVED: Bachelor's
MAJOR: American Ethnic Studies, Chicano Studies		

WORK EXPERIENCE

DATES: From: 12/2017 To: Present	EMPLOYER: Snohomish County	POSITION TITLE: Administrative Specialist
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code) 3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett, Washington, 98201		
SUPERVISOR: Peter Camp, Jill McKinnie - Hearing Examiner, Public Advocate	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
HOURS PER WEEK: 40		
DUTIES: Responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as assistant Public Advocate for Snohomish County; provide responses to questions, complaints, or concerns; conduct investigations for community members' complaints; recommend and implement solutions • Managing a \$850,000 + budget; create monthly budget reports and tracking expenses; process financial transactions including payroll, account payables, receivables, and expense reimbursements • Completing administrative duties for the Office of Hearings Administration and Office of the Public Advocate • Determine ways to make Snohomish County practices more customer-friendly and efficient; recommend and implement improvements • Processing Public Record requests in an efficient and timely manner 		
DATES: From: 5/2015 To: 12/2017	EMPLOYER: El Centro de la Raza	POSITION TITLE: Asset Building Programs Manager
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code) 2524 16th Ave S, Seattle, Washington, 98144		
SUPERVISOR: Estela Ortega - Executive Director	MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
HOURS PER WEEK: 40	# OF EMPLOYEES SUPERVISED: 5	

DUTIES:

Responsibilities included:

- Overseeing the Asset Building Department and programs, including the Business Opportunity Center, Financial Empowerment Center, ESL Program, Young Adults in Technology, Youth Job Readiness Training, Lending Circles and Home Buying/Retention
- Managing a \$500,000+ annual budget including 10 different grants and contracts
- Supervising, training, and providing leadership to staff and volunteers, including a staff of five
- Maintaining compliance with all federal, state, foundation grant and contract requirements
- Creating budgets for each program and tracking expenses and revenue
- Tracking and driving completion of key deliverables and following up on outstanding items
- Writing proposals and grant submissions
- Coordinating events, including homebuyer workshops, business development trainings, galas and cultural events
- Creating and delivering timely progress reports to funders as well as annual reports
- Creating and cultivating relationships with local partners, nonprofits, funders, community leaders and schools
- Handling confidential information with discretion
- Serving as member of El Centro de la Raza's Leadership Team

DATES: From: 7/2011 To: 12/2014		EMPLOYER: Wells Fargo Bank	POSITION TITLE: Banker/Teller
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code) Seattle, Washington			
MAY WE CONTACT THIS EMPLOYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
HOURS PER WEEK: 40			
DUTIES: Responsibilities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting customers with banking transactions and providing exemplary customer service • Assessing customers' financial situation and recommending options to increase their assets • Assisting customers in succeeding financially through promoting financial literacy 			

CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES

Nothing Entered For This Section

Skills**OFFICE SKILLS:**

Typing:
Data Entry:

OTHER SKILLS:

Office/department management - Intermediate - 2 years and 5 months
staff supervisor - Intermediate - 2 years and 5 months

LANGUAGE(S):Spanish - ☒ Speak ☒ Read ☒ Write**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Nothing Entered For This Section

REFERENCES

REFERENCE TYPE: Professional	NAME: Jill McKinnie	POSITION: Snohomish County Public Advocate
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code)		
EMAIL ADDRESS: jill.mckinnie@snoco.org		PHONE NUMBER: 425.388.3365
REFERENCE TYPE: Professional	NAME: Peter Camp	POSITION: Snohomish County Hearing Examiner and Administrator
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code)		
EMAIL ADDRESS: peter.camp@snoco.org		PHONE NUMBER: 425.388.3123
REFERENCE TYPE: Professional	NAME: Allegra Clarkson	POSITION: Administrative Hearings Clerk
ADDRESS: (Street, City, State/Province, Zip/Postal Code)		
EMAIL ADDRESS: allegra.clarkson@snoco.org		PHONE NUMBER: 425.388.3538

Agency-Wide Questions

1. Are you now or have you ever been employed by Snohomish County Government?
Yes
2. If yes, please provide the title of the job(s) held and the department(s) employed by.
Administrative Specialist for both the Office of Hearings Administration and the Office of the Public Advocate.
3. Are you a current Snohomish County employee?
Yes
4. If yes, would this be a voluntary demotion?
No
5. Are you a current Snohomish County Government union member?
No
6. If yes, which union?
7. Do you have relatives working for Snohomish County?
No
8. If yes, please provide their name, relationship to you and the department in which they work.
9. Are you under age 18?
No
10. Are you requesting veterans' preference?
No
11. Have you previously received employment with Snohomish County through the use of veterans' preference?
No
12. In order to receive veterans' preference, you will need to attach an electronic copy of your DD214 or NGB-22 form to your application in the attachments section before you submit your application. Have you attached a copy of your DD214 or NGB-22 form to your application?
I am not requesting Veteran's Preference
13. Will you need accommodation due to disability in the application, testing, or interview process?
No
14. If yes, please provide a brief description of the accommodation requested.
15. Do you understand that you will have to undergo a criminal background check prior to employment (A non-job related conviction does not necessarily bar you from employment)
Yes
16. The County will use email to contact you. We want to make sure that our test and interview invitations and notices do not go to your junk mail/SPAM box. Have you added info@governmentjobs.com and info@neogov.com to your "safe sender" list?
Yes
17. How did you hear about this employment opportunity?
Snohomish County Website
18. Is all the information you've provided in this questionnaire true and accurate to the best of your knowledge? Do you understand that this information will be verified and that any misstatement will result in removal from the eligibility list and/or the position if already hired?
Yes
19. Did you use a previous name(s) when employed elsewhere or when attending school?
No
20. I understand that by submitting my application, I am authorizing Snohomish County to make such inquiries of my personal, employment, or educational references as may be necessary in arriving at its employment decision.
Yes
21. I understand that by submitting my application, I am authorizing information to be provided to Snohomish County and release employers, schools, or persons from all liability in responding to inquiries in connection with my application for employment.
Yes

Job Specific Supplemental Questions

1. Will you meet the requirement of not holding an appointed or elected office in county government after August of 2022?
Yes
2. Do you have a valid Washington State Driver's License or can you obtain one within one month of appointment?
Yes
3. Describe your level of comfort and experience providing customer service. Please include specific examples to illustrate this.

Over the ten years of my professional career working for financial institutions, nonprofits and a government agency, I have grown to be very comfortable in providing excellent customer service. I believe the most important aspect of customer service is being an active listener and recognizing the needs of the customer. In my current role of administrative specialist for the Office of the Public Advocate, we repeatedly receive inquiries for services the county does not provide. Something I pride myself with is always providing the customer with some sort of knowledge or takeaway even though I may not be able to assist them directly.

I provide excellent customer service because I am patient, empathetic and professional. As an example, I recently assisted a constituent who called our office after not being able to pay his property taxes online. He was an older gentleman who disclosed to me that he was not the most tech savvy person. After asking a few questions I discovered that he was attempting to pay his taxes on the Assessor's webpage instead of the Treasurer's webpage. Once I talked him through how to access the correct page, he discovered he did not have his parcel number available. I was able to look this up for him by asking a few more questions. After he had all the information he needed, I remained on the phone with him until his payment was processed. He ended the call thanking me for my calmness with him and appreciated the extra time I took to walk him through the payment.

The Office of the Public Advocate often receives inquiries that are the "last resort" contact. Understandably, the constituent is frustrated at this point because the information they are seeking is not easily searchable or available. It is my role to listen to their frustrations and do my best to make their county experience a positive one by being kind, helpful and efficient.

4. To provide details about your experience with effectively communicating with diverse populations both orally and in writing, describe up to four difficult one-on-one communication situations that you have experienced and what your responses were.

During my time as the Asset Building Programs Manager at El Centro de la Raza, I had to have the difficult conversations of letting go one of my employees. This was difficult for me because I am an empathetic person and knew this employee would be extremely upset. After multiple conversations and attempts to coach this employee, their poor behavior towards other coworkers and community members had not improved. I spoke to my executive director about this and with her approval I developed a plan to let him go. In this particular case, I feared that this person would become physically aggressive, so I invited another male director to be present during the conversation. Once we met, I was straight to the point listing the reasons why he unfortunately no longer was able to work with us. I remained calm, direct and concise as I knew he would attempt to refute the decision. As anticipated, he attempted to do this so I firmly had to remind him that the decision had been made. By the end of the conversation, he understood why he was being let go and thanked me for the opportunities we had given him.

I recently took a call from a woman who was hysterical and incoherent with her words. I patiently remained on the phone with her while attempting to calm her down. After a few minutes she was able to do so and disclosed to me that she unfortunately was a victim of domestic abuse. Knowing the Office of the Public Advocate does not offer direct services that would be able to assist her, I wanted to let her know at the beginning of our call. I let her know that while our office was not able to interfere with her case, I could provide her with adequate resources that would be able to give her the assistance she needed. She was happy to learn about the providers I was referring her to but also thanked me for letting her voice be heard. During my time working at nonprofits and now government services, I have learned that sometimes we just need to be heard. I sympathetically listened to her share her experiences with me. Although we both knew I personally would not be able to provide her the resources she needed, I was able to lend my ear to her and thus that gave her some immediate peace.

The Office of Hearings Administration recently held a contentious hearing. One of the community members who was affected by a county project called our office demanding to speak to the hearing examiner. The hearing examiner decided that I would be best to handle this situation and asked if I could take on the responsibility of calling this community member back. I was tasked with letting this constituent know that per county code, the hearing examiner is prohibited from meeting with him in order to prevent improper influence. I spoke to him over the phone and let him know that while he would not be able to meet with the hearing examiner, I gladly wanted to listen to his concerns and address them. After speaking to him, I discovered he had specific questions about the project as well as procedural questions about how the project was noticed. Knowing the project notices are done by a different department I provided him contact information to the person who would be able to answer those specific questions. I reminded him of the hearing responsibilities our office has and let him know he may contact us again if he had any further questions. By the end of our call, he was satisfied with the information I had provided him and was significantly less irritated.

5. Do you have a college degree or equivalent experience in service to government?
Yes
6. If you answered yes above, describe your educational background and how it relates to your qualifications to serve as Public Advocate OR describe your experience providing service in government and how that provides equivalent education to make you a successful candidate for this position.

I proudly am the first in my family to receive a university degree. I am extremely proud of this as I was able to surpass the many barriers that come with being a first-generation college student. After graduating from the University of Washington, my entire professional career has been focused in nonprofit and government work. During my time at El Centro de la Raza (ECDLR), I oversaw all the asset building programs while continuing to provide small business counseling to community members. ECDLR is unique because they offer over 50 different services and it was my responsibility to be well versed with these other services so that I could offer them to my clients. This is a skill that I carried over to my work at Snohomish County. During my time here, I have taken the time to learn about the several departments so that I can pass along this knowledge to the constituents that contact the Office of the Public Advocate.

In 2018 I had the opportunity to attend the New Ombudsman Training offered by the United States Ombudsman Association. During this conference I gained an understanding of the standard practices and procedures a governmental ombudsman has such as the Office of the Public Advocate. This conference as well as the five years I have worked as the administrative specialist to the Public Advocate have taught me the importance of being able to remain independent, impartial, and confidential when assisting community members.

7. How do you establish and maintain working relationships with elected officials, County employees, representatives of other governmental agencies, and the public?

I understand the importance and necessity of building relationships to achieve a more impactful outcome. I approach every relationship with authenticity and a genuine heart as I believe thoughtful relationships are what lead to growth, change and positive impacts for our communities. I treat county employees, elected officials, members of the public and representatives of other governmental agencies with the same level of respect and willingness to assist. For example, when establishing a relationship with a department I like to learn about the various services they offer and who are their point of contacts but most importantly look for ways that I may be able to ease their workload or how I can become an asset to them. I believe myself to be an approachable person who gives others the confidence to reach out to me directly knowing I make myself available to them. I think this is an especially important characteristic for a Public Advocate as anyone should feel confident and comfortable seeking assistance from an office that will remain fair and impartial.

The following terms were accepted by the applicant upon submitting the online application:

By clicking on the 'Accept and Submit' button, I hereby certify that every statement I have made in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I certify that answers to any questions on a supplemental questionnaire or other online test are my own original work. I understand that any false or incomplete answer or answers to supplemental questionnaires or other online tests that are not my original work may be grounds for not employing me or for dismissing me after I begin work. I understand that I will have to produce documentation verifying identity and employment eligibility in the U.S. I understand that I may be required to verify any and all information given on this application. I understand that this completed application is the property of Snohomish County and will not be returned. I understand Snohomish County may contact prior employers and other references. I understand that I am responsible to keep my contact information including my e-mail address current within my NEOGOV account in order to be contacted by Snohomish County for test and interview invitations and notices about the employment process. I understand that I need to add info@governmentjobs.com and info@neogov.com to my "safe sender" list to ensure communications from Snohomish County do not go to my junk mail/SPAM mail box.

This application was submitted by Gricelda Montes on 8/14/22 12:35 PM

Gricelda Montes

6121 37th Pl NE Marysville, WA 98270 gmontes@uw.edu (206) 310-4135

REFERENCE LIST

Jill McKinnie

Public Advocate
Snohomish County
(425) 388.3365
Jill.mckinnie@snoco.org

Peter Camp

Hearing Examiner and Administrator
Snohomish County
(425) 388.3123
Peter.camp@snoco.org

Allegra Clarkson

Administrative Hearings Clerk
Snohomish County
(425) 388.3538
Allegra.clarkson@snoco.org

8/14/2022

Dear Snohomish County,

I am a proud first-generation Chicana and daughter of Mexican immigrants. From a young age I have had to learn how to navigate institutionalized systems, not only for myself but, for my family as well. I have always recognized my privileges, such as my bilingualism, my light brown skin, my higher education, and my career. I have mindfully used my privilege and passion for social justice and equity to empower and assist others throughout my career.

My experience includes being the Asset Building Programs Manager at El Centro de la Raza. I was initially hired as a Financial Counselor and was then promoted to Programs Manager within four months. I oversaw seven different programs related to workforce development, youth education, skill building, small business development, financial empowerment, home buying and asset building. I managed a team of five staff members as well as several volunteers. I actively explored ways to improve the workflow and coordination of my department. I managed ten different foundation, state and federal grants that funded the department's programs. I had the honor of being a Satterberg grantee and was given the privilege of assisting over fifty BIPOC community members in opening their first small businesses with these funds. As the Asset Building Programs Manager, I was responsible for establishing and cultivating relationships with local and national nonprofits, community centers, schools, partners and funders. In addition, I coordinated events, managed several program budgets, completed reports for each of our programs for our leadership team and funders, managed and evaluated my department's deliverables and provided direct service to our community members. As a result of my leadership, my team and I were able empower hundreds of BIPOC community members by giving them the education and tools to improve or establish their credit, buy a house, open their first business, obtain their first job, learn English, land their first internship, pay off their debt, and most importantly improve their livelihood. It was an honor to serve these community members.

Currently, I have the privilege of serving residents and visitors of Snohomish County as the Administrative Specialist for both the Office of Hearings Administration and the Office of the Public Advocate. During the nearly five years that I have worked at the county, I have had the pleasure of acting as assistant Public Advocate by providing responses to questions, complaints, or concerns of our community members. I have collaborated with Ms. McKinnie, the Public Advocate, to conduct investigations and research for community members' complaints and have recommend solutions. I also determine ways to make Snohomish County practices more customer-friendly and efficient. Most recently this has resulted in an abundant amount of work to create a customer relationship management tool that the county will be able to use to improve their communication with Snohomish County residents.

It would be my honor to perform the duties of the Snohomish County Public Advocate. I have had the pleasure of shadowing and learning from Jill McKinnie for the previous five years. I believe I am asset with subject matter expertise of the Office of the Public

Advocate and would continue to provide transparent and ethical resolutions to constituent conflicts. I understand the importance and necessity of building relationships in order to achieve a more impactful outcome and as the Public Advocate I would continue to cultivate the relationships I have already established at the county in order to better assist our community members.

I look forward continuing my work at Snohomish County and am excited to be a part of the growth of the Office of the Public Advocate. Please feel free to contact me at 206-310-4135 or through email at gmontes@uw.edu with any further questions you may have. I am thankful and appreciate the time you have taken to read my application. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Gricelda Montes

Gricelda Montes

6121 37th Pl NE Marysville, WA 98270 gmontes@uw.edu (206) 310-4135

EDUCATION

University of Washington (UW) Seattle, WA

Sept. 2010 - Jun. 2014

- Major: Bachelor of Arts and Science in American Ethnic Studies, Chicano Studies

WORK EXPERIENCE

Snohomish County

Administrative Specialist

Dec. 2017- Present

Responsibilities include:

- Acting as assistant Public Advocate for Snohomish County, a jurisdiction with approximately 822,000 residents; provide responses to questions, complaints, or concerns; conduct investigations for community members' complaints; recommend and implement solutions
- Managing a \$850,000 + budget; create monthly budget reports and tracking expenses; process financial transactions including payroll, account payables, receivables, and expense reimbursements
- Completing administrative duties for the Office of Hearings Administration and Office of the Public Advocate
- Determine ways to make Snohomish County practices more customer-friendly and efficient; recommend and implement improvements
- Processing Public Record requests in an efficient and timely manner

Accomplishments include:

- Collaborating with several County departments and acting as the assistant Product Owner to create a Customer Relationship Management tool that will be used to improve the service provided to Snohomish County constituents
- Implementing a searchable service directory on the Snohomish County website with County service and program information that resulted in less calls into the Office of the Public Advocate

El Centro de la Raza Seattle, WA

Asset Building Programs Manager

May 2015- Dec. 2017

Responsibilities included:

- Overseeing the Asset Building Department and programs, including the Business Opportunity Center, Financial Empowerment Center, ESL Program, Young Adults in Technology, Youth Job Readiness Training, Lending Circles and Home Buying/Retention
- Managing a \$500,000+ annual budget including 10 different grants and contracts
- Supervising, training, and providing leadership to staff and volunteers, including a staff of five
- Maintaining compliance with all federal, state, foundation grant and contract requirements
- Creating budgets for each program and tracking expenses and revenue
- Tracking and driving completion of key deliverables and following up on outstanding items
- Writing proposals and grant submissions
- Coordinating events, including homebuyer workshops, business development trainings, galas and cultural events
- Creating and delivering timely progress reports to funders as well as annual reports
- Creating and cultivating relationships with local partners, nonprofits, funders, community leaders and schools
- Handling confidential information with discretion
- Serving as member of El Centro de la Raza's Leadership Team

Accomplishments included:

- Empowering hundreds of BIPOC community members to improve their lives, through establishing or improving their credit, buying a house, opening their first business, obtaining their first job, learning English, landing their first internship, or paying off their debt
- Advocating for equitable banking products and creating products specifically for community members without a social security number (SSN). In a partnership with Seattle Credit Union, we created the first mortgage that does not require a SSN for approval.
- Writing and submitting grant proposals and successfully securing funding for existing and new programs that created job opportunities, financial wellness and educational advancement opportunities
- Successfully declared El Centro de la Raza a "Sensitive Location" and assisted families create emergency packets and plans.

Wells Fargo Bank Seattle, WA
Teller/Banker

Jul. 2011- Dec. 2014

Responsibilities included:

- Assisting customers with banking transactions and providing exemplary customer service
- Assessing customers' financial situation and recommending options to increase their assets
- Assisting customers in succeeding financially through promoting financial literacy

VOLUNTEER AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

National Association of Latino Community Asset Builders Colegio Fellowship

Feb. 2016- Oct. 2016

- Gained professional expertise and confidence in my ability to lead and take on executive leadership positions
- Gained insight into issues as well as the social, economic and political challenges facing the Latino community
- Developed critical thinking and professional communication skills
- Member of a diverse network of NALCAB Colegio alumni and over 100 NALCAB member organizations from across the country

Mission Asset Fund Partner Advisory Council Member

Apr. 2016- Dec. 2017

- Provided insight, expertise, and on-the-ground experience of being a Lending Circles provider to other nonprofits
- Provided advice and strategic thinking, all in an effort to elevate and strengthen the Lending Circles Network
- Assisted with planning and hosting the Lending Circles Summit, a national convening of Lending Circles providers and other experts

SKILLS

- Native Spanish speaker
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with diverse cultures and people
- Ability to remain calm in a high demand/busy environment
- Passion for problem solving and solution finding
- Ability to work cooperatively or individually
- Proficient in Microsoft Office, Salesforce, CounselorMax, ETO, Cayenta, and Highline