The clearest goal in my life is to effect long-lasting and far-reaching positive change. Specifically, I want to dedicate myself to climate change mitigation and renewable energy, poverty and hunger alleviation, and economic development in low- and middle-income countries. I am convinced that the best way to do this on a national level is through effective policy and legislation based on scientific and economic analysis. Though I have declared a major that will prepare me academically for a career in environmental policy, I do not have behind-the-scenes insight into the world of policy-making. I am interested in pursuing a SIG Fellowship because I believe that there is no better way to develop as a public servant than by earnestly and open-mindedly diving into policy work. Additionally, this opportunity will allow me to immediately contribute to current issues I care about, rather than wait until after I graduate.

I have developed skills and knowledge relevant to this fellowship through previous courses. In a methods course called World Food Economy, I learned about the economics of food production, consumption, and trade; the relationship among food, income, population, and public-sector decision making; and the role of agriculture in poverty alleviation, economic development, and environmental outcomes. This knowledge was then applied to the final project, in which teams created an economic model on Excel that predicted global trade of staple crops in 2050. This background in resource economics and experience creating an economic model would assist me in the design of solutions to local and global issues. In a course called Human Society and Environmental Change, I wrote a policy brief and three thesis driven papers on current environmental issues, which not only challenged me to consider the many factors that complicate environmental policy decisions, but allowed me to practice writing about science and legislation. The knowledge and skills I gained in these courses have given me a strong foundation for, and approach to, environmental economic policy.

My past jobs and internships have also improved my ability to work in a fellowship setting. Through a research assistant position with Stanford’s Sociology Department, I developed analytical and organizational skills doing qualitative content analysis by collecting, coding, and cleaning data from municipal websites. I also documented an iterative coding scheme and helped create a codebook. Furthermore, I improved my teamwork skills during my two quarters with Stanford’s Design for America. From disagreeing respectfully to being accountable for assignments to accepting unwanted responsibilities, I developed collaborative skills that help me thrive in teams. During a summer internship with South Central Scholars, a Los Angeles based education nonprofit, I took on many roles in an effort to keep the nonprofit’s Summer Academy running smoothly. My workday included administrative responsibilities, facilitation of lectures, event planning, and individual advising with the students. My interactions with the nonprofit staff, donors, and 120 high-achieving, low-income students taught me the nuances of appropriate workplace relationships and gave me exclusive insight into the nonprofit sector.

In the two upcoming quarters before summer, my planned coursework and job will further prepare me for an internship. This quarter, I am taking Environmental Economics and Policy, during which I expect to study the economic sources of environmental problems and various potential policies for addressing, as well as develop the tools necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of an existing environmental policy. Next quarter, I plan to take The Politics of
Policy Making in order to further my understanding of policy-making and policy reformation. I expect to be able to directly apply to this knowledge to any future policy work. During these two quarters, for my position with Sustainable Dining, I will be responsible for the certification of Forbes Family Café under the Green Restaurant Association. This job, like a SIG fellowship, demands self-motivation, strong communication skills, familiarity with Excel, and organizational skills.

A SIG Fellowship would enrich my academic and career plans by helping me gain the skills and experience necessary for a future in environmental and economic policy. I would finally put theory to practice and utilize the tools I developed in the classroom to write policy memos, conduct research, harness effective science communication practices, and generally provide logistical and analytical support. If my hard work pays off and I am one day working for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, or aiding the sustainable development of a low-income country, I will look back gratefully at this fellowship as my introduction to the world of research, economic analysis and policy-making.

**SIG Fellowship Supplemental Essays**

**Precourt Institute: California Air Resources Board**
This summer, I participated in a Sophomore College called Energy in the Southwest. In addition to learning about the political, environmental, economic, and scientific aspects of Southwest energy systems, my class met with the California Air Resources Board, among other California agencies and departments. During a Q&A session with Craig Segall, an ARB representative, we learned about the agency’s goal to promote clean air and public health through economically feasible approaches to air quality regulation. I was amazed by the complexity of the effort that goes into each ARB project, particularly the lengthy timeline and many different experts involved. I had never before realized how intricate and interdisciplinary the creation of policy and regulation was, and how dedicated the policy-makers must be to follow a project from its conception to its completion.

It would be an honor to work for the agency that has played—and will continue to play—such an instrumental role in air pollution control. From establishing the nation’s first vehicle emissions standards, to mandating that 10% of all 2003 car models be zero emission vehicles, to the role that ARB is currently playing in the success of AB 32, I cannot think of an organization that would better prepare me for the future I envision in environmental policy. California is leading the nation in progressive and proactive environmental policy, but this wouldn’t be true without the ARB’s historical precedent of early action. It would be a dream to contribute my efforts to this amazing legacy.