

Dear Latoya,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my interest in serving as a volunteer member of the Somerville Human Rights Commission. As a new resident of Somerville, having moved here in January, I am eager to get involved in my community and contribute to the important work of the Commission.

I have a strong commitment to the values of equality and justice, and I believe the Commission plays a crucial role in ensuring that all members of our community are treated with dignity and respect. My personal experiences have instilled in me a strong passion for advocating for marginalized groups and working towards a more equitable society. I moved to the U.S. from Canada in February 2021 for a position as a Software Engineer at Google. While Canada has its own challenges, I was personally fortunate to have not experienced firsthand the pervasive racism that is prevalent in the United States. Unfortunately my experiences in the U.S. have opened my eyes first hand to the realities of racism and systemic inequality. A particularly disheartening encounter at TD Garden, where I faced unjust scrutiny as a Black woman, heightened my awareness of the systemic injustices faced by many individuals of color and strengthened my resolve to make a positive change.

This experience ignited my passion for breaking down social barriers and fostering inclusive spaces where everyone feels safe and welcome, regardless of their appearance. I am truly dedicated to ensuring that our community embodies these values. For example, I currently volunteer with Google to participate in events that bridge the gap for students of color, enabling them to network with tech professionals and gain access to resources that have been historically inaccessible to them.

My background further informs my perspective: I am the daughter of Zimbabwean immigrants who faced many challenges, including language and economic barriers. Having experienced the loss of my mother at a young age and growing up in foster care, I have a deep appreciation for the complexities of justice and the impact of incarceration as my father was imprisoned for her death. These experiences drive my desire to support marginalized groups, particularly women who experience domestic abuse and advocate for positive change.

In addition, my wife works in affordable housing, which has given me insights into the pressing social issues surrounding homelessness and housing discrimination. I am particularly passionate about contributing to the Commission's efforts in these areas, as I believe that everyone deserves access to safe and affordable housing.

I recently attended the Ward 3 community hearing and learned about the opening on the Commission. While Massachusetts has really impressed me with its commitment to diversity, inclusion, and social justice, I recognize that there is still significant work to be done. My goal is to contribute to the ongoing efforts to address systemic inequalities in our community by apply my organizational skills and passion for community service to the work of the Commission.

Although I am new to Somerville, I am deeply committed to our community and eager to lend my skills in service to others! Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to the important mission of the Somerville Human Rights Commission.

Warm regards,

Primrose Chareka