

Quenton Montgomery-Fletcher

### Personal Statement

When I first started taking Japanese courses at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB), I was a Computer Science and Technology major before switching to Japanese Language and Culture. When I was younger I'd been interested in anime and manga, but had never actually learned the Japanese language nor had the opportunity to do so until entering CSUMB. I'd originally only planned to take the classes to fulfill my general education requirements, but after my first class I fell in love with the language and culture, so much so that by the end of my first semester taking the classes I switched to being a Japanese Language and Culture major student.

While studying Japanese at CSUMB I've had a myriad of experiences that has influenced and changed my view of the world. Taking Japanese classes has helped me to better understand language as a whole and look past my native tongue of English. Where before I may have looked at Japanese characters and not seen anything, now I can decipher them and understand the meaning just as easily as if it were English, maybe even better than English at times due to the unique Kanji system. I've also come to know and befriend many Japanese exchange students as well as studied abroad in Japan for a year to better understand Japanese language and everyday life. After my experiences while studying abroad and in the classroom, I feel that people are much more similar than they are different, no matter where you go within the world, and that befriending one another is actually fairly simple.

Due to my experiences in the Japanese Language and Culture program, I have decided that I would like to become a secondary language and culture teacher upon graduating, whether it be for English or Japanese, and to help others to better understand a foreign language and culture whether it be in Japan or America. My aspiration currently is to apply for the Japanese teaching assistant program JET, and to teach English in Japan for a number of years before returning to America to complete my Master's Degree in language teaching. Where before I felt that my calling in life was in computers and programming, after CSUMB I wholeheartedly feel that I belong within the Japanese Language and Culture major and education system and that my future lies in teaching and helping to bring about a more globalized world.