

SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH STATEMENT (PROMOTION TO “PROFESSOR”)

Since becoming an Associate Professor, I have pursued a scholarly agenda that focuses on the impacts of environmental change on community foodways and well-being, extending the reach of my research and deepening its impact by articulating my guiding methodologies and theoretical priorities in a way that has influenced other scholars in my field. After a short period of retooling in my research career during which my productivity dipped, I have moved from my initial body of research on water management and foodways among the indigenous peoples of southern Arizona to examine how changes to natural and built environments have impacted diverse American communities across the North American continent, as is evidenced in my solo-authored scholarly book (peer-reviewed; in press; **Professional Growth Item 1**) *The World Begins and Ends at the Kitchen Table: How Foodways Nourish Resilience Through Change*, which is now in press at University of North Carolina Press, one of the most respected publishers in the field of American history and culture, and will be published early next year. This book represents five years of fieldwork at three sites—Detroit, Michigan, Los Angeles, California, and Houston, Texas—including interviews with more than 300 consultants. My research was supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant awarded for Summer 2017 (\$20,000; federal grant; **see Professional Growth Item 2**). Through my research, I tell the stories of how communities of color in three cities—African-Americans in urban Detroit, Vietnamese-Americans in Houston, and Mexican-Americans in East Los Angeles—have responded to forces of dislocation, exile, industrialization, and deindustrialization by fostering continuity in community and family rituals around food and evolving those foodways to persist across changes in built and natural landscapes, including access to arable land, open space, water, and fishable ocean, urban economic development and redevelopment, niche industry cultivation, and government-subsidized food programs. Across these changes, I show, communities constitute and reconstitute themselves around food practices. Earlier versions of chapters from this book were published as solo-authored, peer-reviewed articles in the *International Journal of American Studies* (32% acceptance rate) and *Globalizations* (24% acceptance rate).

A major methodological contribution of my work is in its focus on the mutually determining relationship between ecological disruption and political displacement and relocation, showing how parallels in far-flung biomes can actually exert a pull on human migration patterns. This finding, which I developed from my work among Vietnamese crabbers and shrimpers in southeast Texas, offers a new and innovative way of understanding the relationship between ecology and migration, a story which has generally been understood only in terms of the impacts of climate change as a drive of displacement and migration. I have demonstrated “originality of thought” and “innovative contributions to the body of knowledge” in arguing that dislocated peoples can reconstitute their identities and pursue individual and collective well-being by exercising agency in migrating to destinations with biomes supportive of traditional foodways. I shared this theoretical advance in a solo-authored article in the top-tier journal *American Studies* (acceptance rate 11%; **see Professional Growth Item 3**) and in an invited keynote at the American Studies Association annual conference (**see Professional Growth Item 4**). The American Studies Association conference is the most important conference annually for the interdisciplinary field of American Studies, welcoming 1200 scholars from five continents. Thanks to this opportunity, I have also been invited to deliver lectures at universities in New Zealand and Canada, and my work has been cited frequently by emerging scholars in my field.

Even as my scholarly agenda has broadened and deepened its impact beyond the original field sites for my research, I have also maintained and deepened my relationship with my original research site community in southern Arizona, where I have served as a co-PI on a community-based research project focused on indigenous foodways and well-being. In collaboration with colleagues at the University of Arizona and the Pascua Yaqui nation cultural resources office, I submitted a major grant proposal (**see Professional Growth Item 5**) to the State of Arizona Department of Education to develop and distribute secondary school curriculum that centers around changing foodways as a point of entry into STEM fields including ecology, environmental engineering, human biology, and chemistry.

