

Personal statement

Based on my leadership potential and commitment to contribute to improving the world, I was nominated to be a Global Shaper, a program for young leaders run by the World Economic Forum ("WEF"). Why me? Maybe because I adopt an entrepreneurial approach to creating change. My instinct is not to wait for decisions from authority, but to propose solutions, to reach out to my network and to start movements, to build things.

In January 2015, I represented the voices of the Youth in Davos WEF discussions on gender parity, economic growth strategies and banking and financial regulations.

This year at World Economic Forum only 17% of the 2,500 attendees were women. I was fortunate to debate on the equality of women's and men's salaries with brilliant barrister Cherie Blair. She is the wife of former Prime Minister of the UK – Tony Blair. Also, I listened to the speech of Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund. Then, we shared the dinner table with her where she told me about her legal career which I have already known by heart. Mrs Lagarde admired that as a native Russian speaker and a professional athlete, I graduated at the top of the class with Highest Honors (900 students) in French Corporate Law at Sorbonne Law School. Then, she told me that there is a shortage of knowledgeable specialists in French, Russian and American laws. This legendary woman encouraged me to fulfill my dream to sit for American Bar exam.

To interact with the world's smartest French lawyer and to learn from her made me confident that one day I will do just as good as she did starting her career at Baker&McKenzie in 1981. It was probably even a more significant and life changing experience for me than my participation in 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin as the youngest member of the Russian National Team. In fact, at the age of 14, I had to negotiate my first sponsorship contract with O'Neil clothes brand. Since then, reading and understanding legal contracts became my second nature. Driven for legal success, I worked at top world law firms, Clifford Chance in Paris, Allen & Gledhill in Singapore, then in the legal department of HSBC Private Bank and other international companies. It sharpened my legal reasoning and prepared me for the success at your LL.M. course. Moreover, a California based hedge fund agreed to grant me a sponsorship to cover the fees of my LL.M. if I am accepted to Berkeley Law.

In my legal career so far, I have developed unique experiences in corporate and banking laws and got insights in litigation. The most exciting mission was my work at Subordinate court in Singapore in 2013. An American scientist Shane Todd was found dead in his apartment on the day he resigned from Singaporean Science Agency. His next-of-kin accused the former employer of murdering him because of the secret information he held. There was a risk that he would reveal it to American

military authorities. On this mission, I led the team of 12 trainee lawyers from the top Singaporean law firm, Allen & Gledhill. Our task was to report daily the cross-examination of the witnesses and the allegations of the next-of-kin advocates to our clients. Our clients were the alleged murderers of Shane Todd. At court from 9 am until 6 pm, I was typing up after the judges and barristers who spoke Singlish (a dialect of English). Every evening, I worked very hard, sometimes until the next morning, on the compelling arguments for our lawyers. My passion for law and public speaking grew.

If I dare opening the envelope of my future, I can see myself being an international attorney, qualified in France and in the United States of America. I wish to defend the best I can my clients at court, attempting to improve their lives. I conceive that debating in court is a form of competition. I grew up competing in World Cups defending the honor of the Russian Federation in the half-pipe (figure in acrobatic snowboarding). In law, the competition of ideas and the search for compelling arguments require both skill and practice not unlike sports training. At trials, small changes make big differences, just as in sports tiny errors may lead to a tragic injury. The legal system and the world of sport look backward to precedent, though in sports we talk about breaking one's own records as well as the world's best. I visualize doing both. Being prepared for the unknown, ready to prove the cause of my client, I will follow the rules of the legal game and push to the edge of my intellectual limits - this time in the legal world. Law enables me to do intellectually what professional sports has allowed me to do physically.

I have excellent common law knowledge thanks to my Juris Doctor course at University of New South Wales in Sydney. After having intensively studied for LSAT, I have successfully passed it in 2011 with the ambition to study at Berkeley one day. As such, my deep interest to study American law in one of the top Law Schools of your country was born 4 years ago and kept on growing. The opportunity to earn an LL.M. from Berkeley in the frames of the Paris Bar School program is my desired next step on becoming a successful attorney. It is also a challenge which I strive to undertake.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the applicant.