

ABOUT ERIKA TUCKER

Erika Tucker Statement of Purpose

My higher education began in 1991 at Indiana University, where my goal was to double major in English and Art, as they had been my passion in high school. My freshman year was a whirlwind of introductory classes, during which I discovered how much history is required for an Art degree. I remained undeclared and continued to take entry level classes in a variety of disciplines. At the close of my first year, I dropped out to attempt to gain residency in Indiana so that I could re-register at the in-state tuition rate and continue my education at IU. As so often happens, plans did not go as intended, and I went back home to Virginia and enrolled in George Mason University in the fall of 1993. As each semester brought new challenges and new interests, my interest in an English degree had not waned, and I had acquired enough credits to graduate with a minor in Studio Art.

Upon graduation, I accepted my first job as an editor for the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements in Bethesda, MD. Sadly, it was not to be a long posting as six months later my new husband got a job in Los Angeles and we moved. I found a position as an image re-toucher putting together a catalog for a jeweler in Beverly Hills, based on my knowledge of Photoshop. With this experience, I found graphic design work with several companies around the Los Angeles area until I found a home at Printing Industries Association. They provided me with additional software training, and limitless opportunities to improve my skills and I grew my knowledge to include web design and programming.

After 8 years, a divorce and a remarriage, I was again moving out of state for a new husband, but my employer decided I was too valuable to let go. I retained my position and worked for them for another 11 years remotely from Portland. In early 2018, the president of the company retired and his replacement decided that I would need to return to LA to keep my job. I declined, and began working for their sister association, Pacific Printing Industries in Portland.

My position quickly grew from just graphic and web design to Marketing and Communications, as with a smaller budget begets a smaller staff, there were many more opportunities to go around. I surprised myself at how naturally I took on the roles, as I had been tangentially connected with them previously by providing the marketing materials for the programs. I was sure this was the new direction of my career, when a short 9 months later the board appointed a new Executive Director who decided to do away with my position in favor of hiring on-staff accountants.

Since the relocation to Portland, I had launched a company of my own, Little Bear Design, and had been doing freelance graphic and web design, along with selling handmade jewelry and accessories online and at local shows. I'm not comfortable working on a contract basis and desire a permanent position with a good company, so this is not a long-term solution, merely a stopgap while I look for work in the Marketing and Communications field.