

Narrative of Relevant Experience and Background

Growing up as a son of Asian immigrants, I was raised with the values of hard work, education, and service to others. My family and I lived very modestly. I was born into a family of six living in a two bedroom apartment. My mother worked 12 hours a day as a seamstress. My father worked three part-time jobs and went to night school. As my family rose from humble beginnings to achieve the American dream, I excelled in school, science, and the performing arts and became the first person in my family to attend an Ivy League university.

Along the way, I served my community. As a Boy Scout, I cleaned up city parks and raised money for charity. I volunteered for my church and did research on Alzheimer's disease for the State medical center. I performed in theater, music, and dance to enrich my city's cultural arts. As I connected and worked with people from all walks of life, I saw firsthand how diversity can enrich the community and bring about positive change. These early experiences formed a foundation for my lifelong commitment to public service.

While studying at Cornell University, I was inspired by the life and writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and in particular his quote that "everyone can be great, because everyone can serve." His dream and words changed the trajectory of my academic and professional life, and I decided in college to make public service my life's work. I spent my summers working in city government and studying public policy.

After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Communications, I chose to work for an environmental nonprofit through the AmeriCorps program to improve our National Parks while many of the colleagues in my major went to Wall Street. I worked on Capitol Hill and Merrill Lynch to gain experience in the legislative process and private sector before earning a full scholarship to the top government school in the nation, the Maxwell School at Syracuse University.

I graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Master of Public Administration, and gained a strong background in public policy, public management, and conflict resolution. I learned how to make government operate more efficiently and effectively, plan strategically for opportunities and risks, evaluate the costs and benefits of a policy, and solve problems by facilitating win-win solutions with competing interests.

I was selected for the prestigious Presidential Management Fellowship program after graduating, and worked my way up in the Federal government from entry level to senior management within eight years. Throughout my 13 year career in government, I led programs and managed teams to address a wide range of important issues – from health care and food safety with Health and Human Services, to the environment and clean energy with the Energy Department, to financial scams with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

As a government leader and manager, I developed and approved budgets, developed a vision and goals for a large organization, made decisions on the resources and operations to implement those goals, and built high performing teams.

John P. Chu

In the City of Rockville, I served as a Cultural Arts Commissioner and co-led the subcommittee to update the Commission's vision and responsibilities. I drafted and presented an integrated vision based on the Commission's diverse ideas, and facilitated its consensus and approval. I volunteer each year for Peace Day in King Farm, helped to clean my toddler's school, and taught dance to Rockville's citizens.

I am grateful to have a wonderful, supportive family and a successful career in public service. My wife and I love Rockville and are proud to call it home. As a father of two young boys, I care deeply about the future of our city. With my values, background, and experience in serving my country and community, I am ready to take on this challenge and make our great city the best place to live, work, and play for generations to come.

Priorities and Vision

My vision is for Rockville to be a city of diverse, engaged citizens that work together to make the city a safe, sustainable, prosperous place to live, learn, work, and play for people of all backgrounds. My priorities include:

Protecting the best of Rockville. I want to protect the things that make Rockville a great place to live - great schools; safe, livable neighborhoods; access to public transportation, recreation, and parks; a culturally diverse population; and an effective citizen-centric city government.

Growing Rockville's economic development. I want Rockville to continue being a great place to work and a choice location for growing organizations beyond education organizations, contracting firms, and technology companies.

Building a sustainable city. As a person who takes Metro daily to work, I support expanding access to public transportation and bike lanes to reduce pollution and traffic. My home's electricity is powered 100% by solar energy and LED lighting, and I support more clean energy to help people save money and energy.

Improving Town Square with a main attraction. From the input I've gathered from serving in the Cultural Arts Commission, the Town Square needs a main attraction that appeals broadly to people while also being unique to Rockville. One example is a children's museum that draws in the city's sizable demographic of young families during the day, and can also serve as a space at night for music or performing arts.

Building a city leadership pipeline representative of the people and increasing involvement from young people. For Rockville to remain strong and vibrant for generations to come, we need to do more outreach to young adults and to people from other underrepresented groups to join Rockville's Boards, Commissions, and City Academy so that there are more diverse, representative voices in the room to inform the Mayor and Council in its decisions. If I have the opportunity to serve as a Councilmember, I would love to serve as an example and use my expertise in communications to inspire young people to work for the greater good.