

# Why USC?

*Describe how you plan to pursue your academic interests and why you want to explore them at USC specifically. Please feel free to address your first- and second-choice major selections.*

My favorite California ant species, *Myrmecocystus Kathjuli*, led me to learn about the delicate balance of ecosystems, which are often threatened by both invasive species and human development. My affinity for this species sparked a larger interest in Environmental Studies. At USC, I want to pursue the Climate and Environment concentration to better understand how ecological forces are impacted by industry and development.

I'm especially excited to take "Environmental Ethics" because I'm fascinated by the relationship between lawmakers and scientists. I'd love to study the logic behind introducing non-endemic species and why, say, lawmakers in Europe have no regulation while in the U.S. some species can't even be transported across state lines. When competing interest groups act selfishly, a healthy dynamic between science and government is crucial to protect native species such as *M.kathjuli*.

I'm interested in taking my field work to the next level with research at the Catalina Conservancy. In contrast to learning about environmental ethics in a classroom, I'll get my hands dirty and remove invasive species such as fennel. I'll be able to make a tangible impact on the Catalina Islands and observe textbook theories applied to an ecosystem under threat.

As an Environmental Studies major, I intend to assemble a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the climate challenges we face as a population. USC's Climate and Environment program bridges theory and practice so I'll be able to make a positive (and measurable) impact on communities (like Catalina) while embracing my student status.