SEBASTIÁN A. SILVA HERNÁNDEZ

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Dear Hiring Team,

I grew up in Puerto Rico reading newspapers with my grandfather, listening to political talk on AM radio and watching the evening news with him. He let me say what I thought and ask my questions, and my father had the political news on every afternoon when he picked me up from school. Before I ever asked a question as a reporter, I spent years listening to other people ask them. Today I am a journalist, an editor and a Master of Public Policy candidate at the University of Denver, and my work sits where those worlds meet: understanding how institutions work and explaining how their decisions affect people.

This year I reported 12 stories for *El Calce*, a Puerto Rican digital outlet, on government, politics and public policy. I built a public-records investigation into the Governor's seventeen official trips during a water crisis. I found that the government and a coalition of advocates were counting femicides very differently, 29 cases versus 81 in 2024, and reported on why. That story taught me the question that guides my work: what does a number include, and what does it leave out? I have interviewed a former Governor, a former Senate President and a former House Speaker, and in October *El Nuevo Día*, Puerto Rico's largest newspaper, published my first opinion column.

I also run my own newsroom. I founded *The Territorial Journal*, an independent publication on U.S. affairs, Puerto Rico, global issues, technology, culture and opinion, and I serve as its editor-in-chief. I set the editorial direction, lead the Puerto Rico reporting and write in both English and Spanish. Building something from nothing has taught me to make editorial decisions, hold myself to a standard and finish what I start.

I understand politics from the inside as well. I worked on Michael Bennet's gubernatorial campaign, where I researched legislative issues, drafted policy memos and led Spanish-language outreach, and on Daniel Hassler's congressional campaign in Colorado's 8th District. I am comfortable with records and data: I build Python tools to analyze public datasets, and my graduate training has taught me to read budgets, laws and policy closely.

I would bring a bilingual reporter and writer who knows the Puerto Rican and Latino diaspora from the inside, having lived it in Puerto Rico, Florida and Colorado; someone who works well under deadline and takes accuracy seriously; and someone who has already shipped work in newsrooms and on campaigns. I will graduate in June 2027 and would welcome the chance to talk about how I can contribute. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sebastián A. Silva Hernández