

KHADIJA AYUB FRESHMAN **PRESIDENT**

List any previous leadership positions or experiences

- Peer leader at Northbrook Middle: Peerleading was a position that about 20 kids were handpicked for. We had a connections class in which we went around the school to help teachers out. We also were chosen to represent the school at many events through this position. With this position, I went on a field trip to a leadership summit and learned more skills to become a better leader.

Why do you want to be a member of Student Council? Why are you running for the position that you are running for this year?

- I want to be a member of the Student Council for several reasons such as getting to know the GSMST community, being a part of the community as well as bringing light to unaddressed problems through my position. I do not know many people at GSMST, and I know this position would help me meet new people. I also want to give back to the community and help others which I also believe can be done through the Student Council. Nothing feels better than helping others and putting a smile on others' faces. The Student Council does this in so many ways, and I want to be a part of that not only would it make me happier, but I could make the community even more positive. Lastly, I specifically chose to run for Freshmen Class President because I feel that I can bring attention to unaddressed problems that we are facing. As a freshman starting off the school year virtually, I feel a lack of a support system which is something I want to change. I can change this with my position as Freshmen Class president. I can use my skills and bring in the thoughts of other freshmen to help address these issues.

From your perspective, what is the role of the Student Council at GSMST and in our community at large?

- The role of the Student Council at GSMST is like the role of a mother to a child. GSMST Student Council is consistently working hard to provide the best high school experience for the student whether that is through hosting well-planned events or through small acts of kindness such as

giving free candy. They are consistently giving their all as a mom does for her child. The council also works behind the scenes like a mom would for her child. They bring the fun into this academically challenging school environment, and without a Student Council, the students would have less to look forward to. The Student Council's role to the community at large is that it helps bring more positivity to the community at large. The Student Council hosts events to bring fun and joy, and overall this just makes the community better.

List up to three qualities would you use to describe an effective leader. What leadership skill(s) is your strength? How will you use that skill(s) to benefit Student Council and GSMST?

- An effective leader must have efficient communication skills, have perseverance, and be empathetic. I feel that I have all these qualities to some degree or form, but my highest skill is perseverance. I am a person who works hard for what they want and no matter what the circumstance is, always gets the work done in the best way possible. For example, I had answered all these questions before for the Student Council application, and I lost all my answers. This was very upsetting, but instead of not applying for this position I decided to continue and redo my whole application. The skill of perseverance would benefit the Student Council because things are not always easy, and the Student Council needs a member who will not give up when things get rough, someone who will go the extra mile to make sure the event turns out correctly, someone who would give the Freshmen Class President Position their all and I know that I would give the position my all.

What would you most like to improve about your own leadership skills to become a better leader?

- I would like to improve my listening skills to become a better leader. I am a person who naturally takes the lead and loves to talk, but I need to get better at learning when to be quiet and listen because communication goes both ways. When people are talking often we find ourselves not thinking about what they are saying, but instead, we are thinking about what we will say in response. I catch myself doing this quite often. I need to change this habit because a good leader listens to the people they represent. When communicating, knowing when to be quiet and listen is just as important as knowing when to speak up.

Describe an activity for a new event that Student Council could host.

- The Student Council can host a virtual lunch zoom as most of us eat lunch alone. The Student Council can make a zoom and then put kids in breakout rooms. Different members can hop into

breakout rooms and make sure the students are talking and can help them dive into the conversation. I feel this is very important as many of us do not get much social interaction because of the ongoing pandemic. An idea of an event the Student Council can host when things get better is a Karaoke Contest. They can host this on a Friday evening and have students sign up to sing. The council can find judges such as the Chorus teacher, and the judges can choose a winner who would receive a prize. I feel this would be a fun and interesting event, and you can even raise money by charging a small fee to participate.

How can Student Council improve its communication with the student body?

- The Student Council can improve its communication with the student body by being more active on social media as well as creating more social media platforms to be accessed by. Student Council has an Instagram account and a Snapchat account. These accounts are a good start, but they need to be more active on it. I have followed them on Snapchat, but have not seen much activity. They can also use other social media apps such as Twitter, Discord, TikTok, and Youtube. Although these may not seem ideal they can attract kids who use different apps. If the Student Council wants students to find out about a certain event they can make a video about it and upload it to YouTube. This is just an example of how they can use more platforms to their advantage. They also need to put any important announcements on the eclass GSMST main landing page because many of us are digital learners and do not watch the morning announcements live, but all of us visit eclass daily and would easily see any announcements by the Student Council on the eclass page.

What do you think is the single greatest challenge facing our GSMST community and how can Student Council help to resolve this challenge?

- The single greatest challenge facing our GSMST community is the lack of socializing causing loneliness due to the hybrid learning style. This has especially affected the freshmen who come into GSMST knowing only a few people if any at all. Most of us do not have a support system with this academically challenging school in which it is vital to have friends to support you. Our only interaction is in awkward breakout rooms on zoom or if you are an in-person learner you can talk to the handful of students in your class with a safe six feet distance. Most of us can not build a support system in either of these ways, so I feel it is very important that we try to get the freshmen to know they are not alone. We did not get a welcome back week or anything exciting to start the school year with. The Student Council can not fully help resolve this issue because these things are out of our control, but we can help students cope. We can make Zoom calls just to see if anyone needs to talk. We can make goody bags the day the freshmen come to take the PSAT. The goody bag can include candy, a positive note, and some tips from upperclassmen

because most of us did not receive any advice. We can also start having more events to look forward to because at such an academically challenging school these students need a break and something to look forward too and because of this pandemic there have been no events to help start this tough school year. I know this from firsthand experience. I feel every day is very boring, one zoom call after another, and I want to change this by letting these kids know they are not alone, by hosting more events, by reaching out to the students. These times are rough, and we as a Student Council will need to take an extra step. Overall, we just need to give everyone a little extra support whether that is through a nice email or a goody bag.