

Pranjali Patel Executive Secretary

List any previous leadership positions or experiences.

I am currently the Junior class secretary for the student council where I have been part of many communities to practice leadership skills. Most importantly, I was committee head for the 2022 spring dance and I got to plan, organize and execute the dance.

Currently, I am the president of the GA chapter of a non-profit organization called Teens Tutor Teens, and I lead and manage the tutors and students of this chapter. In addition, I work with other chapter leaders from the GA chapter and chapters for Teens Tutor Teens all over the United States. I have worked with our partners to host events, in addition to leading monthly meetings to say updates and reflections.

I was in Next Step Leadership during my freshman year where I got to help lead the advertising part of the Wardrobe project by helping create a video for the morning announcements during my Freshman year. Being part of NSL also taught me key values of how to be a leader and specific qualities and skills of leaders. These include key communication skills, flexibility, passion, and having the ability to not just lead, but let others be leaders too and be a good listener.

Why do you want to be a member of Student Council?

This year, being part of the student council has truly helped me be my best self. With such an amazing group of people surrounding me, I gained skills on how to be an effective leader. Specifically, by being committee head for spring dance, I learned I have what it takes to be part of the executive board through effective organization and planning. By being a junior class secretary this year, I have learned to be organized and take notes on meeting minute docs, which need to be done for every meeting. Through the skills I gained and the amazing experience I have had, I want to continue to be part of student council and contribute my leadership and organizational skills by being an executive secretary. By planning events, and spreading positive messages to the students around GSMST, being part of the student council gives me the opportunity to make a difference in a student's life.

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

In my perspective, the role of the Student Council at GSMST is to give life to the students. As the faculty helps prepare our education and clubs help divert our time in school to areas other than our normal classes, STUCO helps students come out of the mindset of just school and just be teenagers. From the school dances, movie nights, and ice skating events, to giving out candy canes and sweet notes, the GSMST student council helps students enjoy small moments and make everlasting memories. It is because of STUCO, the community at our schools thrives as it does, and connects everyone through personal experiences and working together as one to attain goals.

List up to three qualities you would 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 would have the qualities of communication, problem-solving, and flexibility. Through my involvement in school and extracurriculars, I find myself strong in all three of these skills. Because I am an outgoing person, I would be able to effectively communicate throughout the student council and the committee I am working with to plan and accomplish set goals. Communication is key to any group project, and because STUCO is the embodiment of teamwork, being able to work towards my strengths and communicate effectively is a crucial skill for planning events. Apart from communication, critical problem-solving skills are also needed, especially when working in committees. Through experience this year in STUCO, problems always come up; however, if you can problem solve and be flexible at the same time, you have the ability to come up with a solution even better than the original plan. By being flexible I would not only have the ability to lead but also let others become leaders and put in ideas. Leading is not just the act of doing, but it consists of a lot of listening to others, and because I am flexible I can use this to benefit the student council and GSMST students.

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

Something I would like to improve about my own leadership skills is my presenting skills and public speaking. GSMST has given me a lot of opportunities to develop public speaking through our hands-on learning and STEM, but I am still working on lowering my nerves and talking clearly. When

being a leader, public speaking is a very important quality to possess, especially when you are influencing others, and STUCO would give me more opportunities to work on and build these presenting skills.

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

A new activity that the student council could host is a new sports class game during the spring season instead of class vs class soccer. Even though soccer is a popular sport, students may be more interested in sports such as volleyball or flag football. By having a google form for interests in sports, the student council can plan a new sport according to what the student body wants. Based on the results, we can host this event like a normal class vs class, where the classes would go against each other and try to win.

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

The student council can improve its communications with the student body by creating little boxes around the school where students can write little notes and ideas or suggestions, and the council members can go around and empty these “mailboxes” and read the student’s thoughts. This is a simple and easy way for the student’s voices to be heard, and something quick and easy for the STUCO members to collect.

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 exhaustion/stress. Because of the demanding curriculum and GSMST’s vision for all their students to succeed to their full potential, many students can burn out and overwork themselves. Mental health is very important, and STUCO can continue to help students to relieve stress by continuing to plan fun activities and spread positive messages around the school. Our student council is what helps students get out of their busy schedules to come together to make GSMST an enjoyable place, and being part of the student council helps me be a part of the team that helps GSMST resolve its greatest challenge.