

MILAN NAYAK SENIOR MAL

List any previous leadership positions or experiences

- GSMST International Night East Asia Region Head
- GSMST TSA Member at Large
- GSMST TSA Science Fair Committee Head
- Suwanee Youth Leaders member and graduate
- GSMST Medfinity (old medical club) Junior Officer

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?

- Since arriving at GSMST back in 2017, STUCO at GSMST has never failed to amaze me. From watching the legends such as Jesse Chen and Diane Moon lead the events that our STUCO plans as well as being such professional spokespeople for GSMST, I have admired the organization of STUCO as a whole. As I have gotten closer to these individuals, they made me realize that STUCO is the most direct way to effectively become a leader in GSMST. As a person who is interested in government and public policy, STUCO is the best way to apply my interests and ensure that the class of 2021 gets the best senior year experience as possible. The senior class is truly my main motivation to get an officer position for STUCO, for I want to create events that will make our senior year as memorable as possible given the circumstances we are faced with.

My senior class is precisely why I want to run for the member-at-large position. I truly believe that the class of 2021 at GSMST is the most talented class in GSMST's history; each person is gifted in so many different creative aspects. Our student club leaders, international night region heads, GSLT, and current STUCO members have done a wonderful job carrying the GSMST culture upon them. The member-at-large acts as a messenger between his/her class, and I want to serve as that person for 2021. We as a class will no doubt go down as one of the strongest classes in history, battling a pandemic during senior year and facing so many personal obstacles throughout the year. I want to make the most out of our virtual school year, and becoming the member-at-large for the class of 2021 will allow me to give my best efforts to ensure that we will have the best graduation possible.

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

- Just as a city government has a direct relationship its residents, by enforcing policies and maintaining a strong community bond, the Student Council at GSMST is responsible for upholding the values of leadership and service as well as reminding the student body to practice these values in their day-to-day lives inside and outside of school. It is a given that STUCO plans majority of the events in our community, but its role goes beyond that. Student Council is a group of students that serves as a commonplace for all students at GSMST. Every member elected should represent their class well enough to represent all of their ideas and unique traits. STUCO at GSMST shouldn't just be there for students during school, but also off campus. STUCO is a place where students can come and discuss problems they see with school culture and personal problems they may face.

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?

- My first quality is public speaking; I really enjoy projecting my voice and talking about topics that I love (yes...even topics such as pineapples on pizza count). Public speaking makes me an effective leader because it makes me a prime example for others to follow. I always go by this mantra: a leader isn't necessarily the person, rather he/she is the example or ideology that others follow. By confidently talking about issues in our school such as overtesting, a lack of cultural clubs, and more, real change can occur at GSMST. My public speaking skills will benefit STUCO through a member who is willing to get our agenda done by projecting my ideas loud and clear for everyone to hear.

Secondly, I value my quality of collaboration. There is a reason why there are multiple representatives for each class, it is so that everyone's minds can collectively plan events and uphold the pillars of GSMST. It is very important to me that everyone in a group gets a say in whatever matter STUCO discusses, and with my natural tendency to be inclusive and encourage collaboration among group members, GSMST STUCO will be able to collaborate efficiently and have a lot of fun while doing it. With efficient and comfortable bonding and collaboration between

STUCO members, more events and enjoyable activities will be created for the student body to enjoy.

Lastly, the quality of accountability is something I assure myself to uphold, especially when working with amazing student leaders in STUCO. Not everyone is perfect, and I myself am definitely far from it. Holding accountability and knowing that I will not be right for the first time in the majority of STUCO discussions will allow me to grow and have an open mind when working in STUCO, which will no doubt lead to better planning outcomes for STUCO and thus helping the student body thrive through our productive meetings.

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

- A typical but important answer, organization is something I would improve. I believe that everyone is organized a their own way, whether it be having a calendar, binder, planner, or a digital agenda. I, however, like to keep things in my head and am not very verbal when it comes to my organizational skills. I believe that using my natural speaking skills can help me overcome my lack of communicating what I have to do in order of importance when working on a team. This will surely set a better example for members of STUCO and will lead to not only myself becoming a better leader, but others as well.

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

- This is an activity that normally wouldn't be held, but given the pandemic and social distancing guidelines by the CDC, this is the best we as STUCO can do. An activity that Student Council can host is a car picnic. It has been so long since the GSMST community as been together as one, and I believe we need to see each other physically for our happiness and also as a stress reliever. Using strict social distancing guidelines and limiting the number of people who can come to the car picnic (there will be multiple), essentially everyone would bring a dish and people can come in small, distanced groups at a time (with their consent) and eat in their cars. This can be hosted in the GSMST parking lot and everyone can stay inside their cars (with windows down and doors open if wanted), with the cars being close to each other, and enjoy good food while talking with friends. This would be something specifically for the senior class, because we will not able to have a traditional senior breakfast.

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

- STUCO can definitely improve its communication with the student body by expanding the role of class officers in each grade level. While it is great that upperclassmen are mostly the ones running social media and are the faces of STUCO, giving each classes' officers a chance to speak on the instagram story or snapchat will make the announcement close to their respective grade level. A junior officer speaking to the student body solely about one activity could be divided into 4 different grade level officers taking control of a specific announcement of an event. The freshman class hearing STUCO updates from a fellow class of '24 member will be more meaningful than a class of '22 officer telling them the same information. Equal distribution of social media updates between the STUCO class officers will lead to more engagement, and thus more participation in STUCO events.

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

- I think this is something the entire student body can agree on: we have no cultural clubs! As someone who has been at the school since 2017, I saw how GSMST was when we had clubs such as interact, religious organizations, and more. Students were much happier and could use these clubs as stress relievers. Now that we do not have these clubs, STUCO should do its best to replicate the effects these clubs had on the student body. Providing more opportunities for volunteering such as what interact did, or even create events (with approval of course) for specific students interested in religious/cultural celebrations. STUCO itself is very diverse and has people from all over the world with different ideas to bring to the table. With hard work, I believe STUCO can replicate the cultural clubs' impact on students through events and opportunities for GSMST.