candidates for SGA president

Maria Fonseca-Morales
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How did you become interested in running for office?
My interest in running for office is deeply rooted in my desire to impact change and advocate for my fellow student body. As a Political Science major and ambassador to the President's Society Environment (PSE) program, I became interested in running for SGA President at LaGuardia Community College (LAGCC) because I aim to create a unique opportunity to significantly improve our campus in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way. As an urban college community, we face a diverse and broad spectrum of challenges. Our college is situated adjacent to a manufacturing zone that pollutes our air and waterways. Running for President of the SGA is a way to raise awareness and encourage student involvement in initiatives that aim to improve our campus and its surrounding environment.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
The principles that guide me as a leader are self-awareness, effective communication, and innovation. Knowing my strengths and weaknesses make me a better critical thinker and a more effective communicator, and therefore a better decision-maker. I'm also passionate about innovation, especially in post-pandemic times, as it's become evident that previously established norms are not universally beneficial. These guiding principles of leadership render me a forward-thinking and progressive leader, focused on fairness and improvement.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
One of the many issues important to students at LAGCC is environmental justice and how poorer urban communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. The state of our environment impacts both our physical and mental health. If elected President of the SGA, I will work to improve the quality of campus life in an environmentally sustainable way. I will work closely with President's Society Environmental (PSE) and our student body on planning the improvement of the environment in and around LAGCC. I will aim to encourage and increase student involvement and advocate for a greener campus, and also help to create green spaces for LAGCC students to enjoy.
Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
Students should vote for me because I understand the diversity of our student body and aim to amplify our collective voices to ensure our college is working for us all! As the ongoing global pandemic continues to impact our everyday lives and decisions about our health, surroundings, and interactions are determined, it is paramount to secure a strong student presence anywhere decisions are being made. Through my involvement in our school environmental program, I will work to make our campus greener and improve the quality of campus life for the deserving students of LaGuardia Community College.

Shafiul Kiron
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How did you become interested in running for office?
Make our community enrich

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Punctuality and motivation

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Make option for students either online or in person class

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I involved with local politics so I know how to deal with

Juan Lin
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How did you become interested in running for office?
The first reason is I would like to challenge myself to strengthen my leadership skill after I end the President's Society Ambassador role. The second reason is I have so many ideas of improving student campus life and bridging faculty and students relationship
after Covid-19, however, if I am not a part of the Student Government body, I wouldn't be able to do any of them, so I decided to run for office.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
The most important principle as a leader is to lead by example, be able to show how and why to perform a particular task; and must focus on change, not the fame as a student government, able to seek changes in the campus.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Our in-person classes are slowly back to normal. One issue that is important to students, for now, is returning back to in-person class after almost 2 years, and it's difficult for students to engage in in-person classes again, and many of them prefer online instead of in-person after a while. If I am elected I plan to create a program that helps the student increase interest in the classroom community.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I am here for LaGuardia students; I can merge the most diverse students into one family, timely communicate with students, pass their voices to the board, and focus on helping them improve their campus life after Covid.

Shomaila Liaqat
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How did you become interested in running for office?
I read on the website about life at college. Also, I'm an ambassador of PSE.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
self-esteem
planning
motivation
delegation
empowerment

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Student involvement in co-curricular activities.
Giving them a platform to come forward with ideas, plans, and suggestions to support our college students.
Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I'm a purpose-driven person. I'm great at connecting with people from different backgrounds and cultures by connecting myself. I'm passionate to bring betterment and empowering my team.

Eva Espinoza Carpio
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How did you become interested in running for office?
Running for office became of interest for me because, as a former Student Senator, I got to see how LaGuardia’s pillars worked behind the scenes. I witnessed firsthand how LaGuardia's faculty took on the effects of Covid, whether that be approving benevolent committees, programs, allocating funds to better students' experience at LaGuardia, and so much more. I also saw the stress that Covid placed on students. I was one of them, and as a Student Senator, I worked closely with my peer student senators, and we heard from our classmates, friends, etc., how covid has taken a toll on their grades and how they feared it would ruin any chance they may have on transferring to a four-year college of their choice. Together we heard students' worries and fears and developed the Credit no Credit policy, and it was, as we all now know, successful! Many students had a weight lifted off their shoulders from this policy. If I can provide this kind of relief as President, then that would be my utmost priority... to be alert to what may be worrying students and how I, as President, can help them.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Because of my role models and those who raised me, when I think of a leader, I envision someone passionate, determined to follow through, someone, with the ability to listen and delegate, and finally, someone who values others' opinions. Those are just some principles I believe any leader should have, and I, as President or not, carry these principles with me with every step.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
I've come to learn via heartbreaking stories from connections who too have attended LaGuardia that they didn't know about the "transfer what if" source on DegreeWorks, and because of this, they are now doing more years at the school they've transferred to than they should have. These persons tell me their life would be far different if they had just known. They would've transferred to a school that would have taken their credits and, in turn, have garnered their bachelor's long ago, but that just isn't the case for
these former LaGuardia students. I don't know how many other students are right now, oblivious to what's out there for them. This is a concern of mine that, as President, I would like to address immediately. I want to bring awareness to the many amazing things LaGuardia offers that could sequentially change a student's life.

**Why should a student vote for you to represent them?**

Today, I am asking for your vote for President. Should you elect me, I will listen to your concerns and work hard for you. I will make myself available to hear any concerns you may have that can be resolved with my help. I am all too familiar with what it feels like to be overwhelmed by school. The anxiety before joining a zoom meeting crossing your fingers wifi won't act up and experiencing restless leg syndrome during a presentation. Worrying about doing well in school is normal, but there are some worries that can be vanquished with some awareness. As President, I will do just that; I will do my best to remove any unnecessary worry you may have when it comes to being a student.

*Katia Pedraza*

*KATIA.PEDRAZA@LIVE.LAGCC.CUNY.EDU*

**How did you become interested in running for office?**

I was introduced to it by a professor who knows I am currently serving in a community board panel through previous conversations.

**What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?**

Ambition and the power to succeed; being on The Board of Directors for Union Settlement has taught me that leadership is vital; attention and understanding to those around you are fundamental.

**If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?**

Times may be trying now, and many things aren't fully open; students face a challenge in getting materials from the library. Coordinating a plan to get their suitable materials from the library for their classes without breaking the pocket or simply creating a rotation for the materials.

**Why should a student vote for you to represent them?**

I plan to bring current knowledge from my time in the Board Panel and will be someone who will continuously and actively be present in everything.
Candidates for SGA Secretary

Daniela Baez Reyes
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How did you become interested in running for office?
I have always been interested in helping others; when I received an email with information about this opportunity, I thought it would be a great way of helping other student voices be heard.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Helping others, being honest, reliable, respectful, and kindhearted.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
I believe one issue students often face is economic hardship. I believe one way I can help address this problem is by making sure they are informed and receive all the resources available for them.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I believe students should vote for me to represent them because I am a student who has struggle a lot; by being a single mother of 4, and having to take care of my family, I know what it is to be stressed and still strive to continue my education. I have faced many of the issues most students often have to face; I also have a lot of empathy and can perfectly understand others different situations, therefore I will be a great representative.

MD Mushfiq Ur Rahman
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How did you become interested in running for office?
It started in the President's society. While I was honoring my skills through the great mentor, I was blessed. Then, I became confident and eager to run for office. Also, my friend who is working at SGA shared her experience, role, and responsibilities and I felt that I can use my skills in this job and I will learn many skills needed for my academic and professional career.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Some of the principles that guide me as a leader are to be a good listener, to communicate with members, to be innovative, to be self-disciplined, to be loyal, and to make everyone feel important. These skills are always maintained by me. Also, I have experience performing as a leader and I am always willing to take on challenges.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
There are many students who face financial challenges. Most of our international students and immigrant students face the most financial challenges. Basically, some students are full-time students and full-time workers. A lot of times they can’t manage their time properly and their grades fall and they drop out of college. If elected, I will work on this. To solve this problem, we can arrange some workshops for time management and stress relief and create flyers or booklets for those students.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
Students should vote for me because I want to represent the concerns of students. LaGuardia Community College has a huge variety of students, mostly international and immigrant students. I am an immigrant student and I feel their problems and concerns. So I will try my best to solve their problems with my knowledge and experience. Also, I am a member of the President's Society, Honors Program, ASAP, and PTK. I will use these resources to complete any problems or concerns.

Candidates for SGA Event & Program Coordinator

Paul Ortega
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How did you become interested in running for office?
I look at this as a chance to be a voice in my community as I look to gain the experience to one day hold a similar if not larger position in my world community.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
I walk in alignment with the principles I preach.
I believe it’s important to take time to understand before we judge.
I believe in goal setting for the long and short term and believe that persistence can get us all to new heights.
I’m open minded and understand that I don’t know everything but love to surround myself around individuals that offer different outlooks.
If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Continuing to move in a more modern and technological way. As the world continues to grow I believe we have to in the school setting that sets up the youth for the world. Doing online classes was a transition into the new tech world of our everyday actions. Many of our tech based systems at school are behind. Consistently staying updated with technology and its software advances is something that can be key in preparing students for the world.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I want success for us all. I want us to enjoy this time we have at school but also walk away everyday feeling like it’s worthwhile. That’s regardless we show up online or in the classroom, there should be a take away.

Akeyla Matthews  
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How did you become interested in running for office?
Being a part of student government was never a plan of mine. I became interested in being the Events and Program Coordinator at LaGuardia Community College because I feel that the college needs new and innovative ideas from a person raised in a diverse environment such as Jamaica. I am a natural leader and have been elected several captain, vice-captain, and leadership roles. I do have prior experience as an Events Coordinator for the Tourism Action Club for the academic year of 2019-2020 at Saint George's College. Additionally, I was the vice-captain in charge of organizing, planning, and overseeing the production of the inter-house competition, a series of athletic competitions for students grades 7-13.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Excellence, determination, and passion. I commit wholeheartedly to every task at hand. I believe in seeing every project to the finish line while trying to learn and develop my characteristics holistically. I always keep in mind that I am serving a higher purpose and that it is important to maximize my potential and the potential of those who I am serving.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Important Issue: Socializing Post-COVID 19
Solution: This is a challenging issue to address given that the country is currently still recovering from the horrors of the pandemic. I want to plan and organize virtual and in-
person activities that help students and fellow SGA members to develop strong relationships, build teamwork, communication, and personal branding skills. For example, I would like to organize a Picnic and Paint event. This would be a small-scale event throughout the spring semester at local parks near the college campus. This is to allow students from different backgrounds to connect and share cultural diversity stories, to develop a sense of pride in self, and for members of the SGA, community to build stronger relationships.

**Why should a student vote for you to represent them?**
I represent an inclusive community where everyone's voice can be heard. I represent women in STEM fields and first-generation students. Most importantly I represent the diversity of different cultures of the students of this cohort who bring a fresh outlook on society. I will bring to this position innovative ideas by paying close attention to details, the ability to work under pressure, great organizational, time management, and communication skills.

**Candidates for SGA Parliamentarian**

**Jeison Paniagua Lorenzo**

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**How did you become interested in running for office?**
I saw the announcement in my email. I have always been interested in making a good impact in other people’s lives.

**What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?**
I believe in being neutral to the issue until I have heard both sides and taken all factors into consideration before making a final decision. Also, I believe that small differences can make big waves so any problem, no matter how small, when solved, it can change lives for the better.

**If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?**
In my role I would make sure everyone is doing their jobs correctly, following all rules and regulations to the letter, including making sure everybody is heard and respected.

**Why should a student vote for you to represent them?**
I am an impartial person by nature. I believe in equality and I like getting things done, especially when it comes to the benefit of others.
Omar Mazhar
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How did you become interested in running for office?
Professor referral

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
Consistency, respect, equality, honestly

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Lack of collaboration. Communication is key.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
I have a strong understanding of team work. I know how to motivate others.

Candidate for SGA Academic Representative - Health Science

Qingwei Ma
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How did you become interested in running for office?
I think it is an excellent chance to improve our skills such as communication and organization. I need more opportunities to improve my English speaking.

What are some of the principles that guide you as a leader?
There is a limit to what one can do if people are themselves limited. You must always have faith in yourself.
You reap what you sow.

If elected, what is one issue that is important to students and how do you plan to address it in your role?
Education is a long journey that requires patience and persistence. I could encourage those students who are about to give up, although My English is not that fluent. So, if I dare to show up here, nobody should give up their dreams.

Why should a student vote for you to represent them?
They will like me if they contact me. And I hope I could do something meaningful to help others. I am patient, kind, and honest.