

## CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS

### **\*\*Student Body President\*\***

#### **\*\*Matan Ariel (ma2157):**

“It's part personality, part management”

Matan is pronounced: m'ah / 't'ah / n (just in case you were wondering)

The reason why you should vote Matan for President is simple: I get the job done! Instead of making campaign promises, I ask you to look at my record: I have served on the GS Student Council for the past two and a half years. I attend the meetings, bring proposals, and assist with projects spearheaded by others. My current role on the GSSC is to represent the GS student body in the [Columbia University Senate](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/senate)<sup>1</sup>. During my two years on the Senate I fought for GS students. An example? I managed to get the Senate to recognize the [housing](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/senate/resolutions/03-04/HousingResolutionApril20.htm)<sup>2</sup> needs of GSers. Another example? I led a campaign to redesign the [Columbia diplomas](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/diploma)<sup>3</sup>, an issue which GS students have complained about for years. The Trustees are now considering such changes. I'm currently working to increase your financial-aid and am heavily involved in the [National Tuition Endowment](http://www.ibooks.co.il/NS_GetProdInfo.asp?prodid=34457000) initiative. A native New Yorker, I moved to Israel as an infant, and was raised there. After serving three years as an entertainer in the Israeli Navy, I decided to seek an American education. I thus returned to New York in the fall of 2002 and matriculated at GS. I anticipate graduating in the spring of 2006 with a B.A. in Political Science. I also continue to have a great interest in entertainment, and since completing my military service I have produced and starred in four music videos and seventeen CDs of beloved [Israeli children's music and Jewish holiday songs](http://www.ibooks.co.il/NS_GetProdInfo.asp?prodid=34457000)<sup>4</sup>.

I offer you my experience and knowledge, and plan on helping other GSSC members reaching their full potential as student leaders. My only promise is this:

I will work hard for you, and I will get the job done!

#### **\*\*Patrick Grosso (pcg2103):**

#### **\*\*Stephen Davis (sgd2005):**

Hey GS. I'm Stephen Davis and I want to be your next Student Body President. I am currently a junior in the Joint Program with GS and JTS. For the past three years I have served on the GSSC, this year as VP Internal Affairs and the year before as Sophomore Class President. As VP Internal, I was responsible for the internal operation of the council, including secretarial duties as well as overseeing all council programming to make sure the events you want happen. I coordinated between the class presidents and various chairs to plan a calendar of events for you.

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<sup>1</sup> <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/senate>>

<sup>2</sup> <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/senate/resolutions/03-04/HousingResolutionApril20.htm>>

<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/diploma>>

<sup>4</sup> <[http://www.ibooks.co.il/NS\\_GetProdInfo.asp?prodid=34457000](http://www.ibooks.co.il/NS_GetProdInfo.asp?prodid=34457000)>

My three years here at GS have shown me the benefits of our diversity. In no other school on this campus or elsewhere, can you find such a variety of students, all contributing toward a vibrant community. This year, we began to harness these differences and showcase them through talent mining and cultural events. When you walk around campus, unlike my freshmen year, people now recognize GS and who it stands for. This is in no small way thanks to years of hard work by the GSSC. Many meetings by council members have paved the way toward greater cooperation among the undergraduate schools. Today, GS students can participate on campus as any other undergrad. The drawback to greater integration can be a loss of individual identity. As your President, I plan to challenge myself and next year's council to find a way to both bring GS further into the Columbia community while still preserving the differences and sense of community that makes GS unique.

You may be wondering how we achieve this goal. Finding better ways to pass information along to you is the first task. What good are events we plan if you don't know about them? Incessant emailing is not the answer. Rather, we recently launched a new website and just added a VP Communications to the council. Through this new focus on communication, we will be better equipped at getting the word out, over email, flyers, website, and so forth, and not just about GSSC events, but about the campus events your Student Life Fees have already paid for. The GSSC spends a great deal of money funding numerous campus groups, all of which you are entitled to join or attend their events. Then, the GSSC can focus on planning other types of events. That means off campus events with possible group discount rates. That means a speakers series with successful alumni and other important people. Food events in the lounge are great ways to build community, but so are these other event types.

Building community in GS is difficult, with GS students on campus, off campus, and outside the city. Community is about individual relationships coming together, the smaller picture. Perhaps a campaign to find study partners, commuting buddies, and new friends where you live would build help, especially for students new to the area. We must also continue to involve GS with the rest of Columbia. That means working closer with NSOP, the undergraduate orientation program. That means clearing the way for GS students to sign up for pre-orientation programs like CUE and COOP. That means GS buying into Senior Week so those GS students can participate.

If you've read this far, you know I have many ideas and the courage to lead GS in the coming year. I have enjoyed my time working for you to make GS and Columbia meet our needs as students and I hope that you will choose me for your Student Body President for 2005-2006.

**\*\*VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT LIFE\*\***

**David Friedlander (df2159):**

Columbia costs a whole lot. It costs a lot of time. A lot of money. For older GS students, it costs patience upon answering the inevitable: “what’s your Masters/PHD in?” or “why didn’t you finish before?” But we continue. All of us, somewhere along the line, became determined these costs were worth it—that we were worth it; that we are capable of hanging with the best; that the costs, while daunting, were insubstantial compared to our ambition.

While the busloads of incoming CC and Barnard kids are, more or less, conveyor-belted into community formation, we GSer’s have a unique challenge: how do we form a community—a space where likeminded students can best help each other realize their ambitions—with such a great disparity in the make-up of our student body?

Five years ago I left the University of Colorado, disenchanted by a pedestrian student body and a lackadaisical intellectual climate. When I decided to return to school after five years of merrymaking and intermittent floundering, I consciously chose a school that would cultivate my curiosities and intellectual ambitions. I feel GS possesses the raw material to realize those ambitions: there is an ample supply of intelligent students and Columbia’s vital academic and intellectual environs are fertile ground for creating a rich student life. But the sense of community seems distinctly absent.

As VP of Student life, I will strive to manifest a strong community within the GS population. As a GS late-term junior, I know my time at Columbia is limited. Perhaps my first attempt at school was beset with social isolation and depression, but I am determined that this time I am going to make the most of my collegiate experiences. Furthermore, I am committed to pulping all the juice I can from the ungodly cost of tuition at Columbia—that means getting involved and creating the community I, and many other GS students, want. If given the opportunity to be your VP of Student Life, you too will be able to drink my precious juice.

**\*\*VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE\*\***

**\*\*Marianna Astakhova (ma2254):**

I was born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia. During 90’s I came to Miami, Florida with my family to study. In Miami I was majoring in International Business, yet, I never finished my studies since I had to return to St. Petersburg where I continued in an Accounting program. During my early twenties, I managed to travel quite a bit: visiting Europe, and South and Central America. I also had a privilege to live in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where I studied Portuguese language and participated in various programs. I greatly appreciate for having the chance to serve as a Vice President of Finance for GSSC. During this year I have learned a lot about the academic system and its operation which guide me to better serve the GS community. This year, GSSC has provided funding to underprivileged communities, supported many groups through co-sponsorship, established networks with GS alumni and formed various types of events through out the academic year. My main role I believe was to make sure that “our” money is managed

efficiently and accurately. I have all the entries and back up copies organized and double check all transactions. Therefore, my primary goal, was – “to minimize our costs and to maximize our benefit.” This year a number of changes was implemented in the area of finance, for example:

Transparency – It is your right to know about finance

Finance Committee – Join the Finance committee and take part in managing the money

Statements – Every semester there is an expense report provided via email

#### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Finance professional with over 5 years of accounting management and corporate finance experience focusing in Large Retail Operations. Proficient with all aspects of accounts payable, tax preparation, accounts receivable, general ledger, customer service, and reconciliations. Sound understanding of general accounting principles.

Significant professional experience in financial planning, general accounting, project management and auditing.

Versatile professional with a wide range of work experience as a financial professional, business interpreter, actress, musician, social worker, and community service leader. Solid Planning and Organizational Skills in planning all aspects of each project from inception through completion.

Proficient in Word, Excel, Microsoft Office, QuickBooks Pro.

Cited by supervisor as “a team player with very good interpersonal skills. Always willing to take on new challenges outside of her areas of direct responsibility.”

#### UNDERGRADUATE ACCOLADES & INVOLVEMENTS

Student Council - Officer for university student council in Florida International University.

Recipient of various academic awards and scholarships.

Phi Theta Kappa International Honors Organization - Treasurer and Board Member

Social Worker working with disabled and autistic children in the Miami area.

Founder of Student Service Organization to provide Mentoring for students

Coordinator of VITA IRS Tax Program providing tax filing education and assistance to low income community members.

#### **\*\*UNIVERSITY SENATOR\*\***

#### **\*\*Winston Guo Hong Chow (wkc2104):**

I have been a student at the School of General Studies for the better half of two semesters, and I am particularly interested in representing the student body on issues concerning more funding from the University for need-based Scholarships (as Columbia College students, comparatively, receive such funding in abundance.) It is my conviction that students of Columbia University should not be dealt such grievous obstacles as

penalty simply for being non-traditional. In fact, I believe that our greater experiences in the world outside the University makes students at General Studies particularly important to the academic environment of Columbia University. Additionally, among my other primary goals is to establish larger and more frequent academic forums that will be held by the School of General Studies in tandem with other schools in the University. It has been my observation that although there are a great many forums at the University, there are many subjects of interest that are hardly covered that would contribute to the education of students about our society. Forums could include panels on sub-culture, urban activism and local social awareness; panels that speculate about the modern trends in urban society and how they will shape the future. However, my main objective in forming a series of academic panels is to include students and scholars from other schools, thereby integrating GS more closely into the university environment. I have long experience as a student activist as well as holding positions in student government offices. Since beginning my academic career I have held office as the Student Government President of BMCC, working closely with a population of over 26,000 students, and I have held office as a Vice-Chair of the USS of CUNY serving as a representative of all the colleges in the City University system. As a student of GS I realize integrating into the University culture and society proves to be one of the largest obstacles of the GS student body, and it is my intention to bridge that gap completely to make the GS experience fully enriching for each individual student.

**\*\*Matthew Lucks (ml2453):**

Matthew Lucks ([mattdeluxe@gmail.com](mailto:mattdeluxe@gmail.com))  
Who Am I?

I am a 27-year-old undergrad.  
I am studying Music and Pre-Med.  
I am like everyone in GS – a non-traditional student.

In 1995, I attended SUNY Stony Brook immediately after high school with poor results. The next few years of my life were an exploration of many opportunities: musician, special education aide, network architect, even real estate mogul; only the real transformation occurred after losing 165 pounds. It was after this physical change that I could create the possibility of my future.

Upon graduation, I plan on attending Albert Einstein Medical College to pursue anesthesiology. Eventually, I will conduct research on the biochemistry of hearing and develop a system of pain management using music therapy. The one thing that I carried over from the lowest to the highest points in my life is my love of music and the powerful feelings it can evoke.

Who I am is Matthew Lucks. I live in Brooklyn with my fiancée, Adrienne, and our pug, Esther. I play guitar and bass with a local rock band, Engine, and I am running for GS Senator.

## Why GS Senator?

You, as a GS Student, are extraordinary. I want to get to know each of you during this incredible time in our lives. I live far off campus and I rarely have the opportunity to experience the random cups of coffee, the impromptu study sessions, and the general socializing of university life. In the not so distant future, I will be a doctor. Holding a patient's hand, providing them with the information to make the best decisions regarding their health and comforting them in their times of need will be a daily occurrence. Rather than exclusively experiencing that humanity during sickness, I would like to take this time to work with you during the most inspiring times of your life.

We, as students in the School of General Studies, are underrepresented in the University Legislature. I will ensure that we have a voice, one that will be heard, one that speaks for all non-traditional Columbia University students, regardless of our age, academic pursuits, lifestyle or background.

I have never held any office before. During high school, I was too shy to run in any election. I've come a long way since then. I believe in taking risks now, not thinking small. All of us here in the School of General Studies are risk takers. We are a valuable part of Columbia University. It would be my honor to be your diplomat.

### **\*\*Christopher Robert Riano (crr2107)**

I was born outside Toledo, Ohio in 1984. While a buckeye by birth, I moved right outside Washington, DC at a very early age and spent most of my life living in Maryland. In high school I was involved both in the Boy Scouts of America, as well as served as the Student Member of the Board for Juvenile Justice and as the Assistant Coordinator for the Teen Court program in Montgomery County (MD), frequently named one of the top programs in the nation. I am an Eagle Scout, a National Hispanic Merit Scholar, and was awarded the Maryland Governors Citation, the Maryland Senate Citation, and the Maryland House of Delegates Citation in 2000 for my "exemplary service to the citizens of my state."

After graduating from high school, I spent two years studying at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and worked towards a major in Electrical and Computer Engineering. In May of 2003, I decided to take a year off and moved here to New York City to work in a completely different field as a high-fashion model. It was a very insightful year, and helped me grow into a better person more than any other time in my life. I have been a student at Columbia since the summer of 2004, and officially transferred into General Studies in the fall of 2004. I plan to major in Political Science and Psychology. Currently I continue to work as an independent contractor for the United States Government, and I have the honor of being the youngest person in history to have the privilege of serving our nation and its people in my capacity.

I have never believed in accepting the status quo, and I strongly feel that there is always something that can be done to improve our situation as students on this campus. Our strengths as GS students make us who we are, a group of highly motivated and successful people working hard towards completing our educational goals. It is critical that the most vital link between ourselves and our university community, or the forum of the University Senate, be constantly presented with a strong voice to broadcast our concerns about the part we play here at Columbia. From academic freedom to ROTC on campus, the most crucial and controversial topics of discussion fall upon the Senate, and it is critical that our opinions are voiced during these discussions.

Since becoming a part of this community, I have been the only non-senator from the School of General Studies to officially serve in the University Senate, working on the Senate Executive Sub-Committee for Student Trustee Relations, which is seen as vital to our ability to make sure we as students continue to be a strong voice in our campus community. Strengthening ties between the student body and the University Trustees is beneficial to everyone in both the long and the short term, and we have made progress towards creating better ties during this past year. I have made a point to attend the monthly meetings of the University Senate for the past year, as well as frequenting the Student Affairs Committee of the Senate, where the student senators serve to look at issues specific to the student population.

At GS we have been fortunate to have strong leadership and representation in the University Senate for many years past, and I feel that my current involvement in the Senate, my other work within the GSSC, as well as my other past accomplishments have more than prepared me to continue in that tradition as your University Senator.

**\*\*Scott Stewart (dss2112):**

Scott Stewart is a highly intelligent and perceptive young man who came to Columbia University committed to capitalizing on the opportunity for personal growth and to use that growth as a means to help others. His active participation and political leadership are precursors to what will likely be a lifelong dedication to public service.

With his extensive knowledge of working with administrators, faculty, and staff through the shared governance process, as well as his experience with leadership as Student Government President at Austin Community College and as the current Political Affairs Director of the Columbia University College Democrats, Stewart is seeking the position of University Senator for the General Studies Student Council.

Stewart's dedication to public service is exemplified by his numerous volunteer and elected positions he has held. He has showed exemplary work in academics as well, earning him the recognition of the National Dean's List for the 2003-2004 academic year. Through his involvement as Student Government Association President at Austin Community College, Stewart created the Austin Community College Student Senate, which allowed for greater representation among the 37,000 students attending the

college's seven campuses. Since its founding, the Student Senate has increased the political capital and bargaining power of the students among the administration and faculty. Stewart also chaired numerous committees that instituted policies governing every aspect of the college – most notably, he served on the committee that created the framework for the college's first Academic Freedom policy. His role with this committee led to his appointment to the Shared Governance committee. This committee created a structure for shared governance among the administration, faculty, staff and students, which set in motion the appointment of students to every major policy committee at the college. Stewart would like to bring this system to Columbia as well.

Always in his volunteer service, Stewart is consistent, dedicated, passionate, and enthusiastic. With all the opportunities Columbia University has provided, he has committed himself to giving back to the community. Stewart has been involved with the Everybody Wins reading program - which sends Columbia University students out to New York public schools one hour a week to read to kids ranging from the first to fifth grades. His commitment also led to an internship with the Office of Government and Community Affairs at Columbia University. Stewart's internship has allowed him to participate in the planning and implementation of two student Lobby Day trips to Albany, New York and Washington, D.C. These trips have been paramount in giving students from Columbia University the means with which to sit and talk with legislators about expanding the government's role in providing for more student financial aid.

To be precise, Stewart's creative energies and refreshing idealism will serve the school and the university well. Because of his experience, passion, and leadership, Columbia's motto "In thy light we shall see light" will truly shine.

### **\*\*SOCIAL CHAIR\*\***

#### **\*\*Danielle Klein (drk2104):**

I am Danielle Klein, and I am a running for GSSC Social Chair.

I have many fresh ideas to bring to the GSSC. Having served on the first year committee of the council, I intend to use my experience to further improve GS student life.

As social chair, I will organize innovative, new GS events, to unite our student body, and strengthen our presence in the larger Columbia community.

To make these events exciting and successful, there is no substitute for good leadership and great organization, two of the many qualities that I will carry into my position on the council.

Columbia is a major, usable resource, and I will work hard, incorporating your ideas and the ideas of the class committees, to maximize the potential of our GS student body.

### **\*\*ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ON COMMITTEE ON INSTRUCTION\*\***

#### **\*\*Gabrielle Breen (geb2107):**

To the GS student body,

Academics are the core of a university. They are essential to the maintenance of a strong education and the happiness of the student body. The concerns of the student body must be addressed. My name is Gabrielle Breen and I want to represent the General Studies student body.

I am running for GS representative to the Academic Affairs and Committee on Instruction, and hope to have the privilege of representing you and voicing your concerns at Committee on Instruction (C.O.I.) meetings. I am currently a first-year student in the dual-degree program with the Jewish Theological Seminary. My previous experience sitting on a curriculum development committee for an extracurricular high school program has prepared me for this position. I was the only student on the committee that helped to restructure the after school educational program. I understand the demanding nature of curriculums, especially because I am currently in the process of completing both the Columbia curriculum and the JTS curriculum. Additionally, like most of you I am faced with time constraints, which often lead to time limitations in regards to academics.

I want to help bring the academic concerns of the GS student body to the C.O.I., which is a committee including members from the faculty, students, and administration that sets the GS academic policy. I will ensure that information regarding academics is readily available to the GS student body in addition to encouraging interaction between GS students and the faculty from various departments of Columbia. Overall, I want to maximize the academic opportunities for every student at GS by maintaining constant communication with the other schools of Columbia.

I want to help make the daily lives of GS student body easier, and my involvement in GSSC as the Academic Affairs and Committee on Instruction Representative would enable me to do this. We are all students at Columbia University because we understand the importance of having a strong academic background, and recognize the high quality education with which Columbia provides us. As the GS representative to the C.O.I., I will work to make sure that these high standards are upheld and more academic options are available to GS students. Thank you in advance for your support.

**\*\*Shuky Ehrenberg (yae2102):**

Like many in GS, I was neither born nor raised in the US. I arrived here from Israel approximately a year and a half ago, and have been a student in GS since. At the beginning of the current semester, I joined the GSSC as Engineering Council Liaison. My recent exposure to student council made me realize that GS is important to me, especially in the area of academic affairs.

While the current GS advisory system is more than satisfactory, GS advisors can't, and shouldn't be expected to be experts in every field. A more thorough method of acquainting GS students with the available majors is necessary, especially when the fact

that many GS students are transfers, and have a very limited amount of time to choose a major is taken into consideration.

Another important area under the heading of academic affairs is the issue of GS core requirements. The GS core has seen certain positive changes in the past couple of years (such as the change allowing for a more diverse set of courses to satisfy the science requirements). I believe that the GS community will benefit from further changing the core requirements in a similar direction, and hope to promote such changes as Academic affairs representative.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

**\*\*ALUMNI AFFAIRS AND ACADEMIC CAREER SERVICES  
REPRESENTATIVE\*\***

**\*\*Katia Gaika (eut1):**

In order to become involved in student life at the School of General Studies, I became a member of the Social Life Committee that helped organize the Fourth Annual GS Formal during my freshman year. During my sophomore year I held a full time position on the Student Council of GS and served as Liaison to Columbia College.

I am originally from Russia. I got my first income as a photo reporter at the age of 15 and by age 21, my works were published in national newspapers and magazines. I respectively held three personal exhibitions. After starting a photo and event-planning agency, at age 23, I chose to go to New York and get my degree from Columbia. Now, at the end of my sophomore year, I have decided to run for the position of Alumni Affairs and Career Education Representative. I would like to help students to use every opportunity Columbia and General Studies has to provide. I will help improve the overall understanding and access to post-graduate options for employment and graduate studies.

**\*\*Era Makoci (em2112):**

There is an inherent paradox about biographies. The majority of those who will be interested in someone's bio, especially an exhaustive one, will be exposed to the idealization that occurs (if CCE has done a good job in training us in selling ourselves for the real world) seeing things in a good, favorable light. They will therefore be idealizers and, at the same time, perpetrators (consciously or not) of the intentional fallacy. Part of the appeal of someone's bio will be the distinctive stamp of that person's personality, predilections, style, particular tics and obsessions. And yet, it often seems that the person we encounter in the biography says nothing about all these. Moreover, it often feels that he/she cannot possibly have done the things he/she says he/she has. And the more intimate and thorough the bio, the stronger this feeling usually is. In the present case, in a sincere bio of mine I would emerge as a vain, timid, and at the same time

pompous Eastern-European, given for much of my life to dithery romantic relationships. This would be about as different as one can get from the motivated, talented, ambitious, honest, pansophical, extremely adult woman, with a GPA of 3.8 that will emerge out of a CCE –trained GS-er. Rightly or no, anyone who is mature enough will resist this dissonance, and will look to find a way to explain and mollify it. But, to make a long story short, my point is that, were I to be trusted with the position, I would not disappoint you.

**\*\*Mateo A. Sanchez (mas2178):**

Where will you work after graduation, or during this summer? As mature students, we have so many advantages: a better idea of who we are, many honed skills, and a clearer idea of what we want. We also have many disadvantages: we're busy, tired, pulled in so many direction by all the other pieces to our nuanced lives.

As the Alumni Affairs and Academic Career Education Representative, it would be my job to help you find that paid internship, finally write that resume, and get that job of your long differed dreams. I've worked in publishing, media development and am currently a part of the Columbia Impact program. I'm on campus five days a week, so you won't have to be. I'm asking for your vote, because I look forward to helping you make our career paths a well-traveled road to your success.

**\*\*SENIOR CLASS PRESIDENT\*\***

**\*\*Akiva Zablocki (az2111):**

It has been an honor for me this year to serve as Junior Class President. Together with my VP, Jean-Michel Tijerina and a great Class Committee we have worked hard to promote internal General Studies (GS) social activity with personalized and creative community events. We organized monthly Sunday Brunches, Meet the Majors Nights, Class Lunches, the Junior Class Formal, and more. We feel that networking between GS students and alumni, as well as building a strong GS sense of community are essential.

As Senior Class President, I will continue my work to further integrate GS into Columbia University student life. In addition, together, we will work to make our senior year and graduation unforgettable experiences. We plan to initiate monthly senior class networking opportunities with alumni. I believe GS students should feel that they are part of a larger sphere than just academic framework at Columbia.

Some background information about me: I was born in New York, and I grew up in Israel. I returned to New York four years ago, spent a year at Baruch College and then enthusiastically transferred to the School of General Studies. I have spent the last three years as a Manager of the Midtown Tennis Club. I served one year as GS Junior Class President, and I look forward to continue my work on the GSSC this Fall.

If you have any questions, suggestions, remarks, or short stories you wish to share with me, please do not hesitate to send me an email. I am always looking to meet new GS students who share the same enthusiasm in contributing to campus life.

**\*\*SENIOR CLASS VICE PRESIDENT\*\***

**\*\*Jean –Michel Tijerina (jt2139):**

It has been an honor this year for me to serve as Junior Class Vice-President with Akiva. Akiva Zablocki and I are running for Senior Class President and Vice-President together on April 12.

I was reared in Brussels, Belgium and made my way to New York a few years ago. The opportunity of being a student at General Studies and serving on various boards at the University has proven an invaluable experience that I will cherish for a long time to come.

I wish for all students to benefit from the numerous opportunities that Columbia University and the School of General Studies have to offer. As the Senior Class Vice-President, I will also encourage and support the Senior Class in your post-graduate pursuits.

Beneath, please feel free to read over my involvement with the Columbia Community since my first semester as a General Studies student in autumn of 2003:

Columbia University School of General Studies Student Council (GSSC)

- Junior Class Vice-President (2004-05)
  - Chair: Joint Junior Class Formal / Tsunami Relief Aid
- South East Asian League of Columbia University (SEAL)
- Co-Founder (November 2004)
  - Chair: Tsunami Relief Fundraiser for Save the Children
  - Chair: Building a High School in Cambodia (2005-07)
  - Editor: SEAL Newsletter

Taiwan Government Fellowship

- Summer 2004 Intensive Studies and Cross-Culture in Taipei
- Editor: Class Journal

Harvard World Model United Nations (WMUN)

- Columbia University delegate, ASEAN Regional Forum, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt (2004)

European Union Spring Institute

- Columbia University delegate, Prague, Czech Republic (2004)

Columbia University Business School's Chazen Institute Chinese Language Program

Columbia University Equestrian Team (2003-05)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our plans for the upcoming Senior Class, please feel free to contact me.

**\*\*JUNIOR CLASS PRESIDENT\*\***

**\*\*Josh Niehaus (jan2112):**

Josh Niehaus is currently the first year President and an ambassador of good will. He graduated in the middle of his public school class in 2001, in beautiful Seattle WA. After graduating he traveled through Europe and the Middle East on a journey to find himself (which was often alone and scared). After finding himself he realized that he was ready to grab life by the reigns and ride it into the next phase of his life, which was a two-year stop over at Seattle Central Community College (Time magazine's college of the year in 2001). It was there where he developed an insatiable thirst for knowledge and dare I say, (dramatic pause) learnt to love humanity. All seemed to be going good for the prodigal young politician and he transitioned nicely into his new world at Columbia, that is until... he got his first E-bill. Nothing could of prepared him for the actual price he was paying for his tuition. Yet even after this horrific encounter he somehow battled his way back to glory and went on to represent the "first years" as their fearless leader. When asked about this amazing experience and miraculous comeback he said "I just wanted to make the most of my time here and get involved, the council taught me so much and I wouldn't be nearly as qualified for Junior class president had I not been on council last year".

After a year of accelerated academic achievement Josh Niehaus is now an incoming Junior and wants to represent you for another year of policy making, social planning and good times. He was responsible for the G.S. community wide Shabbat dinner and St. Patty's day party at the Parlour this year and is in charge of planning the end of the year barbeque and party (which you should all come to)! When asked if he had any final words to leave us with, he said, "Getting acclimated the workings of the council and bureaucracy was intimidating at first and took a while before I was fully comfortable, but now that I know the system and have great relations with so many council members who are running for reelection I am confident that next year will be even better than this year and am anxious to start planning major social events for the entire G.S. community in the year to come".

**\*\*JUNIOR CLASS VICE PRESIDENT\*\***

**\*\*Christopher Franz (cdf2102):**

After graduating from High School in 1994, I embarked on a 5 year journey with the US Navy. There I traveled the world, and learned the Electrical trade and the virtues of teamwork and taking initiative.

In 2000 I began working for the IBEW (International Brotherhood of

Electrical Workers) and worked as a Journeyman Electrician until I began attending college full time in 2003.

With the desire to make more out of my education, I joined the National Honor Society and ran my community college's chapter. I was the Chair of a Relay for Life event last year, which collected over 81,000 dollars for the American Cancer Society. Currently I am serving on the first year committee, and on the Spring Formal committee.

I am running for Junior Class Vice President because I feel that I have the planning skills and group experience required to bring you all parties that ROCK, So vote for Josh and Chris as your Junior Class President and VP.

### **\*\*SOPHOMORE CLASS PRESIDENT\*\***

#### **\*\*Gabriella Theisen (gjt2101):**

Party name. Activate!

My name is Gabriella Theisen and I am extremely excited to be running for the Sophomore Class President on the GS student council. After being part of the GS social committee this past year, and finishing a year at Columbia as a student at both JTS and GS, I have a unique perspective to bring to the GS council. From first hand experience, I understand both the challenges and amazing opportunities Columbia has to offer. I feel as though I now know what it means to be a GS student. With fall semester only around the corner, I am excited, and prepared to utilize that which I have learned to further expand, and heighten the student life of the sophomore class and GS student body as a whole. As the saying goes, “everyone in GS has a story” and the reality is, it’s true. A GS student is impressively unique, remarkably ambitious, and has had unique life experiences. I want to create an atmosphere within the class where people are excited, and eager to contribute their ideas and talents to the student body. I know the wealth of resources that exist within our student body, and it is extremely important that we utilize them. I want to bring our experience at Columbia to it’s highest potential. In the end, we all want to have an enriching, and downright fun experience. Our years here at Columbia should be one of the best times of our lives. As Sophomore Class President I will make it my duty to be sure this is achieved.

### **\*\*SOPHOMORE CLASS VICE PRESIDENT**

#### **\*\*Rachel House (reh2108):**

My name is Rachel House and I am extremely excited to be running for Sophomore Class Vice President on the GS student council. I am a first year student in the joint program with General Studies and the Jewish Theological Seminary. I had the benefit of working on the freshman class committee this year. While on committee, I helped in the plan many successful events including a cultural Shabbat dinner and a St. Patty’s Day party

that I'm sure many of you enjoyed. Through this experience, I have seen first hand the lack of an active and lively social community. I am elected as Sophomore Vice President it will be my top priority to involve as many GS students as possible

Community is one of the most important aspects that a college can offer. A strong community is essential to academic and social growth. If there is one thing I have noticed about my time at Columbia, it is the segregation that exists among schools in the Columbia community. We need more of a GS presence on the Columbia campus. GS students are often stereotyped as old, or aloof, and not as interested in social events. If there is one thing that can be said about GS students it is that they cannot be stereotyped. We are all extremely fortunate to benefit from our diversity. It is my main concern to unite the sophomore class as well as the entire GS community and make our presence in the greater Columbia University community heard.

Along with Sophomore Class Presidential candidate, Gabriella Theisen, I plan on utilizing one of GS's greatest assets; I want to draw on the wealth of knowledge and experiences that GS students hold to enrich the lives of everyone within the community. I want to create an open sophomore class social committee that includes a diverse group of people. If someone was in a band than I want them to play at the parties, if someone else has worked as a sushi master then they should help organize a sushi dinner. The more involved we all become in our community the more we will all benefit. I also want to organize sophomore class volunteer projects that will not only benefit the greater community but also be a wonderful social atmosphere. As Sophomore Class Vice President I see it as my job to create more social opportunities for GS students and more importantly more opportunities for students to contribute to enriching our community.

**\*\*FIRST YEAR CLASS PRESIDENT: Paige Lampkin (pl2174):**

**\*\*PARENT'S REPRESENTATIVE: Katarzyna Brathwaite (kzb2101):**

**\*\*DELEGATE AT LARGE:**

**\*\*Ogbe Airiodion (oa2118):**

The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their determination to excel [ . . . ].  
--- Vince Lombardi

When I arrived in America, in 1997, I was alone. I had no family here; no college education; no job experience; no social experience. All I had was \$150, and a determination to build a better life, by making maximum use of the opportunities available to me, in a land of opportunities. That determination led me to the School of General Studies of Columbia University to attain a Bachelor of Science in Economics Degree.

During my time here at Columbia, I have noticed a distinct under-representation of GS students, compared to the representation of Columbia College or other students. Thus, my decision to run for the GS “Delegate At-Large” position. As a GS Delegate in the Policy, Student Life, Finance, Communications committees, or other committees, I hope to increase the representation of GS students in these committees; committees who make policy and decisions that affect GS students. I believe I hold the experience, talents, and abilities needed to be successful as President

As a GS Delegate, I hope to utilize my communication, organizational and leadership skills; attained during my three years in the retail industry, as a sales and customer service representative. In addition to these skills, my leadership experience, attained at my previous college, will be invaluable to me in the representation of GS students. While at Northern Virginia Community College (previous college), I served as student Senator for the Business and Information Technology Division; as Vice-President for Student Ambassadors; and, as Chair for the Elections Committee.

I currently serve as a representative for music and performance groups in the Activities Board of Columbia (ABC). In the community, I am a member of the Harlem Tutorial Program. A program that provides one-on-one tutoring support for children.

A lot has changed in my life since I arrived in America. Nevertheless, something that will never change is my realization that education is like climbing a cliff; not to advance is to drop back down. The college experience, outside of classroom activities, plays a major role in a successful education. As such, if or when elected to the Delegate At-Large position, I will strive, with other members of the General Studies Student Council, to maximize the opportunities available to GS students; to assist them in the development of a memorable and successful college experience.

**\*\*Tyson VandenAkker (tjv2101):**

I want to serve the GSSC as a delegate at large for the finance committee because it will allow me to work with both the GSSC and the Activities Board for proper allocation of funds. As a member of the GSSC, I will work to help unify the GS community and represent its interests well in the greater Columbia community. I will also work to demystify GS in the eyes of the councils I am assigned to work with, and in the eyes of the students of other Columbia Schools, particularly Columbia College and SEAS.