



## 2025 Nominating Committee Candidate Statements

Thank you to the following self-nominated candidates for volunteering to be on the Nominating Committee!

### **Eric Chen (Class of 2026 Parent)**

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#### **Why do you want to serve on the Nominating Committee?**

I have an opportunity to have a direct impact on selecting leaders who shape the TJ school community. Being part of this process would allow me to help ensure that the committee identifies candidates who are passionate, dedicated, and capable of supporting students, teachers, and families. Also, it's an opportunity for me to give back to the school community.

#### **Brief Bio (tell us who you are, what experience you have if any with PTSAs or other volunteer or related experience)**

I have been an IT Professional for more than 20 years and a parent of 2 TJ kids ('24 and '26). I have an active volunteering background. For the past 2-years I have been Treasurer of the TJ Academic Boosters. I have also volunteered for the TJ PTSA Audit committee and held various volunteer roles for kids Soccer clubs.

**Lisu Gu(Class of 2028 Parent)**

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**Why do you want to serve on the Nominating Committee?**

I am a mom of two TJ students, one who graduated in the class of 2019 and one now in the class of 2028. I am a PTSA member and volunteer in the TJ community. As a non-profit organization, the goal of the PTSA is to support TJ students' educational success and their health and well-being. Each year, the TJ PTSA organizes numerous social events, family-oriented activities, and collaborative projects that bring together our students, our school, teachers, and staff, and our families. My family and I value and benefit from all the work TJ PTSA leaders, members and volunteers do and the efforts they make for the TJ community. Year after year, I have seen TJ PTSA stand strong and work efficiently despite leadership turnover. The key to keeping TJ PTSA strong are the core leaders who serve as officers. This is why I am interested in volunteering my time to help recognize and seek talented and qualified nominees for the elected leadership of the TJ PTSA.

**Brief Bio (tell us who you are, what experience you have if any with PTSAs or other volunteer or related experience)**

My name is Lisu Gu. Both of my children are TJ students, one in the Class of 2019 and the other in the Class of 2028. I am a licensed financial advisor with thirteen years of experience working full-time with people from all walks of life. I hold B.S. and M.S. degrees. As for volunteer experience, I am a member of the TJ PTSA and have volunteered for and contributed to numerous TJ events, including AP exam proctoring, teacher appreciation luncheons, Chinese New Year celebrations, ANGP nights, and other community activities. During the pandemic, I helped TJ PTSA initiate community Zoom meetings. For the past 7 years, I have also hosted annual public educational seminars on college financial aid for TJ parents. Outside of TJ, I have volunteered regularly in a local non-profit Chinese school and its community for the past 14 years. The school relies 100% on parent volunteers. I served as assistant Principal/Dean for 2 years and worked with parents, teachers and students at the school. Upon the end of my term, I identified my successor and successfully handed over my position.

Personal interaction is essential to my daily job. I have experience talking and working with diverse groups of people, identifying and understanding their characters and situations. I am willing to devote my time and to bring my experience to TJ PTSA by

nominating myself as a candidate to serve on the Nominating Committee. Since I made that decision, I have read most of the relevant information required for this position. I am now familiar with TJ PTSA Bylaws and TJ PTSA Nominating Committee Instructions. I have also watched the Virginia PTA 2024 nominations & elections webinar (March 12, 2024). I believe I am a qualified candidate for this position and look forward to contributing to the TJ community.

### **Jane Iyengar (Teacher and former parent)**

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#### **Why do you want to serve on the Nominating Committee?**

A strong committee with a clear vision for TJ's reputation and commitment to student success is crucial to long-term success. I am nominating myself for the Nominating Committee to help identify the best candidates to implement TJ's and the TJPTSA's vision and mission. We need candidates who can understand the school system's dynamics and support its goals.

I am confident in my ability to identify, screen, and recruit such candidates as a member of the PTSA Nominating Committee. I am familiar with the TJPTSA's vision, mission, and bylaws. In the past, I have served on TJPTSA fundraising committees and was involved in fundraising efforts for school building renovation projects and boosters that support student club activities. My past experience and interactions with various community members make me a valuable asset to the TJPTSA Nominating Committee.

#### **Brief Bio (tell us who you are, what experience you have if any with PTSAs or other volunteer or related experience)**

My name is Jane Iyengar, and I am a Technology Educator at TJ with an MA in School Administration and Leadership. As a former TJ parent, my passion for children led me to return to TJ as an educator. My ability to build strong relationships and interpersonal skills will enable me to serve the nominating committee effectively.

I have served on various committees within the school system and the community. My experience working with diverse stakeholders has helped me foster a strong community of learners. My association with the PTSA dates back two decades. As a former TJ parent and PTSA volunteer, I was involved in fundraising efforts for school

building renovation projects and boosters that support student club activities. As the saying goes, 'It takes a village to raise a child.' This principle is equally true for the TJ PTSA."

**Kokeb Kassa (Class of 2027 Parent)**

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**Why do you want to serve on the Nominating Committee?**

I want to contribute my time and effort to identify strong candidates for the PTSA. In my first year at TJ, I have engaged very closely with the PTSA and have seen how critical the group is to the continued success of TJHSST.

**Brief Bio (tell us who you are, what experience you have if any with PTSAs or other volunteer or related experience)**

I have a Sophomore at TJ, my daughter Aden, and a Senior at Woodson, my son Kaleb. We have lived in Fairfax since they were in KG and my sister's children also went to school in FCPS so we are very vested in ensuring the success of our schools. I have served in multiple capacities on PTSAs in Fairfax County at Wakefield Forest and Frost, from holding an elected position to volunteering. Currently, I am very active volunteering at TJ with Sports and Academic Boosters as well as Cultural Celebrations. In my professional life, I lead fundraising for one of the largest recipients of foreign assistance funding from the US Government. I have a BSc from Cornell University and an MBA from Georgetown University.

**Dunia Pardo (Class of 2027 Parent)**

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**Why do you want to serve on the Nominating Committee?**

As a parent, I am deeply invested in our community's well-being. I am committed to fostering a more collaborative environment that will positively impact our students and families. I believe that by working together, we can create a stronger, more supportive community.

**Brief Bio (tell us who you are, what experience you have if any with PTSAs or other volunteer or related experience)**

I am a mother of a rising senior in college, my son, who is majoring in civil engineering, and my daughter, a current sophomore at TJ, I bring a unique perspective to our community. With a solid background in architecture design and almost two decades of experience, I am well-equipped to contribute to our shared goals and bring innovative solutions to our community.

My commitment to our community extends beyond my professional life. I volunteer actively, contributing to the PTSA diversity celebrations and the school All Night Graduation Party (ANGP) leads. I have also served on the Human Relations Committee (HRC) and the Nominating Committee (NC). This year, I was honored to welcome our class 2028 to our region and serve as the TJ Academic Boosters President. I am deeply humbled to be part of our school's fantastic community.

As a parent, I am deeply invested in our community's well-being. I am committed to fostering a more collaborative environment that will positively impact our students and families. I firmly believe that working together can create a stronger, more supportive community.