

Personal Statement as Candidate for Secretary of EECS GSA

Tara N. Sainath
tsainath@mit.edu

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I am honored to accept the nomination for Secretary of the EECS Graduate Students Association. Over the past five years at MIT, I have come to enjoy and appreciate the strong EECS community which surrounds me, and I hope to continue to expand and strengthen this community for all students.

I have been very involved in the EECS department. I have been a tutor for Eta Kappa Nu. In addition, I have also served on the Underground Guide. Both of these experiences have helped me to interact with students and gain a good insight into student views on different classes. In addition, I have been actively involved with many extracurricular activities at MIT. This includes serving as the webmaster for South Asian American Student's Association (SAAS) and Tau Beta Pi, as well as being actively involved in house government for my dorm. I think that my knowledge of the MIT EECS department, the resources available for student-run organizations and MIT life in general will be useful in helping the GSA to accomplish its goals.

I recently attended an executive meeting of the GSA. Several issues were brought up which I felt I could make a direct contribution towards improving. One issue was that many graduate students, particularly M. Eng students, were not aware of many GSA events and were not on the e-mail lists. When I was webmaster for SAAS, I worked closely with the publicity chairs in making sure we attracted new students every year, particularly during orientation. In fact, during my time as webmaster, we were able to expand our members and build a larger, stronger South Asian community at MIT. As secretary, one of my goals will be to attract more active participants to the GSA and help build a larger network of students. Helping to build this larger community will help to bridge the gap between different research groups within the department, something which has been a huge challenge thus far.

In addition, while the GSA does sponsor many activities, another issue that came up at the meeting was a lack of funding for activities. Both SAAS and TBP host large events where obtaining funding is a top priority. This has helped make me aware of the different ways to obtain funding, as well as different administrators to speak with. Obtaining more funding will naturally help us to hold larger events, interact with more groups and again build a larger community.

Thus as Secretary of the EECS GSA, I will continue to help expand the GSA community and keep our members well-updated about our activities. Above all, I will work closely with the other members of the committee to ensure that needs of our members are met and that we work together to strengthen the GSA community.

Sincerely,
Tara N. Sainath