







Student Ambassador CONVENING '26

Next Steps: Rising Together, Leading Forward
Growth, Collaboration, and Forward Movement

PROGRAM BOOKLET

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	3
SCHEDULE	4
ROLL CALL	5
OPENING SPEAKER	6
NOTES: OPENING SPEAKER	7
SESSION DESCRIPTIONS	8-9
SPONSOR SESSION	10
NOTES: SESSIONS	11-12
NOTES: TEAM TIME	13
ACTION PLAN	14
MEET OUR SPEAKERS	15-16
NOTES: CONVENING	17-18
CONTACTS AND THANK YOU	19

2026 STUDENT AMBASSADOR CONVENING

About

Student Ambassadors play an important role in creating welcoming, connected, and supportive school communities. The 2026 PWCS Student Ambassador Convening brings peer leaders together to share experiences, exchange ideas, build relationships, and strengthen their leadership skills. Through interactive sessions and conversations, participants will explore ways to use their voices, support their peers, strengthen their Student Ambassador Programs, and turn ideas into meaningful action in their schools and beyond.

Learning Objectives

- **Identify** personal strengths and leadership skills to positively influence school culture
- **Explore** ways to create inclusive environments where all students feel welcomed, connected, supported, and valued
- **Practice** communication, self-awareness, and student ambassador support strategies that strengthen relationships and build trust
- **Exchange** ideas, experiences, and promising practices with peer leaders from other schools
- **Recognize** opportunities to care for self, advocate for others, and lead positive change
- **Develop** actionable ideas to strengthen student ambassador support programs and make a meaningful impact in schools

What You'll Walk Away With

- Greater confidence in your voice, strengths, and ability to lead
- New friendships and connections with peer leaders from across PWCS
- Practical strategies for welcoming, connecting, and supporting peers
- Fresh ideas and inspiration to strengthen your student ambassador support program
- Actionable next steps to make a positive difference in your school community









Schedule

Time	Program	Location
9:30am-10:00am	Check-In	Sci Tech Campus, *Verizon Hall, Lobby*
10:00am-11:00am	Opening Session	Sci Tech Campus, *Verizon Hall, Auditorium*
11:10am-12:10pm	Sesson #1	Sci Tech Campus, *see below*

Red Group Verizon Aud.	Green Group 110 E	Blue Group 110 H	Yellow Group 110 L	Graphite Group 110A	Purple Group 204
Creating Inclusive Spaces: From Fitting In to Belonging	Leadership 101: Finding Your Voice and Leading with Confidence	Communication That Connects	True Colors: Understanding Yourself and Supporting Your Peers.	From Ideas to Action	From Our School to Yours: Building Strong Student Ambassador Programs

Sponsor Session: 203	Building Belonging Through Aligned Student Leadership Initiatives

12:10pm-12:55pm	Lunch	Sci Tech Campus, *School Assisgned*
1:00pm-2:00pm	Sesion #2	Sci Tech Campus, *see below*

Red Group 110 E	Green Group 204	Blue Group 110 L	Yellow Group 110A	Graphite Group 110 H	Purple Group Verizon Aud.
Leadership 101: Finding Your Voice and Leading with Confidence	From Our School to Yours: Building Strong Student Ambassador Programs	True Colors: Understanding Yourself and Supporting Your Peers.	From Ideas to Action	Communication That Connects	Creating Inclusive Spaces: From Fitting In to Belonging

2:10pm-2:40pm	Team Time	Sci Tech Campus, *School Assisgned*
2:45pm-3:30pm	Closing Session	Sci Tech Campus, *Verizon Hall, Auditorium*









Roll Call: Are You Here and Are You Ready?

In the military, roll call is a way to make sure everyone is present, accounted for, and ready to go. Today, we continue to put our own Student Ambassador spin on it! Your team will create a short, energetic call that represents who you are and you'll use it during the roll call to let us know you're here, together, and READY!

Your Mission: Create Your School Team Call-Out!

Think about YOU
What makes your school, team, or community special? What do you want others to know about you?

Pick your message
Choose a word, phrase, or sound that represents your team's energy, identity, or spirit.

Make it YOURS
Keep it short, loud, positive, and easy to remember. Add a rhythm, movement, clap, or other creative element if you want!

Practice it together
Make sure everyone knows their part and your team can deliver it with confidence.

Get READY
When your school is called, bring the energy, and let us hear your call!

Remember
There is no "right" call-out. Be creative. Be bold. Be YOU.

Opening Speaker

Motivator • Educator • Storyteller • CEO LMSvoice



Joseph Green is a storyteller, educator, and narrative disrupter with a passion for connecting people through the power of words. Joseph brings over 20 years of experience helping individuals and organizations harness their stories to inspire change.

He's facilitated more than 5,000 workshops across the country, guiding everyone from students to professionals on topics like substance use recovery, mental health, social justice, and youth empowerment. Whether delivering a keynote for organizations like Google, SAMHSA, or the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, or connecting with audiences in schools and communities, Joseph has a gift for making every story resonate.

Joseph's work has been featured in the award-winning documentary Tipping the Pain Scale, a powerful exploration of systemic failures and solutions in addiction recovery, and in the CDC and Ad Council's Recovery Starts With Hope Campaign. His poetry, storytelling, and leadership are rooted in one belief: when people are empowered to tell their authentic stories, they can transform their lives and their communities.

Most recently, Joseph collaborated with a team of psychologists and neuroscientists from Harvard's Massachusetts General Hospital to develop an innovative drug and mental health education curriculum designed for parents and caregivers. This initiative equips families with tools to better understand and support loved ones facing substance use and mental health challenges.

In addition, Joseph is working with the Catalyst Center, a collaboration of the California Alliance, to infuse storytelling into their comprehensive training program. This initiative empowers non-medical, youth-serving personnel across California to recognize when and how to engage with young people around substance use and other behavioral health concerns.

As the CEO of LMSvoice, Joseph leads a team that's redefining what it means to inspire connection and social change through storytelling. Whether on stage, in workshops, or behind the scenes, he's dedicated to creating spaces where stories spark understanding, empathy, and real action. Joseph invites you to dare to disrupt harmful narratives, embrace your voice, and make a lasting impact—because every story has the power to change the world.

NEXT STEPS: RISING TOGETHER, LEADING FORWARD

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Opening Session

What word, phrase or drawing captures my initial response to this session?



What am I bringing back?



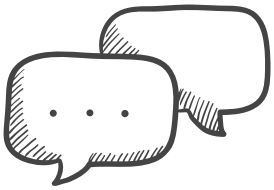
Why does it matter?



How might we use it?



What is one step I am willing to take?





SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Communication That Connects

Presenter: Dr. Matthew A. Cronin
Costello College of Business, George Mason University

Managing conflict through communication is a fundamental skill in life. Students will practice listening with intention, expressing themselves clearly, navigating challenging discussions, and using communication to strengthen relationships and build trust.

Creating Inclusive Spaces: From Fitting In to Belonging

Presenter: Joseph Green
LMSvoice

Students will explore how to create spaces where everyone feels seen, valued, and included; recognize when someone may be left out; and practice ways to build connection and belonging.

From Ideas to Action

Presenter: Philip Wilkerson
University Career Services, George Mason University

Students will explore strategies for managing stress and protecting their wellbeing, recognize signs that a peer may be struggling, and practice how to respond and connect a friend with trusted support.



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

From Our School to Yours: Building Strong Student Ambassador Programs

Presenter: Nicole Pitre
Prince William County Public Schools

Students will share what is working in their own programs, hear how one program approaches recruiting, training, events, and organization, and identify ideas they can bring back to their schools.

Leadership 101: Finding Your Voice and Leading with Confidence

Presenters: Maya Pesjak Richardson, Nia Christy, and Jay Kim
Center for Leadership and Intercultural Engagement, George Mason University

Students will explore what it means to be a leader and recognize the strengths they already bring to leadership. Through interactive activities and conversation, they will build confidence in communicating their ideas, advocating for themselves and others, and using their voice to make a positive impact.

True Colors: Understanding Yourself and Supporting Your Peers

Presenters: Vicky Gil, Afsana Ahmadi, Emory Lombino, and Jihyun Lee
Center for Leadership and Intercultural Engagement, George Mason University

Students will explore their True Colors to better understand their strengths, communication style, and how they connect with others. They will also discover that greater self-awareness can help them manage stress, build stronger relationships, and better support their peers.

SPONSOR SESSION

Building Belonging Through Aligned Student Leadership Initiatives

Club sponsors will participate in a collaborative discussion on how the No Place For Hate(NPFH) and Student Ambassador initiatives align to create welcoming, inclusive, and supportive school communities. Participants will explore shared goals, examine opportunities for partnership, and discuss strategies for strengthening student voice, leadership, and engagement. The session will also focus on the division's vision for expanding and sustaining efforts that foster belonging and ensure every student feels valued, connected, and respected.

Session Facilitators



Kimberly S. Simpson, EdS
Military Achievement Specialist
College, Career, and Student Support
Prince William County Public Schools



Vonne D. Thomas
Coordinator of Social Emotional Learning
College, Career, and Student Support
Prince Wiliam County Public Schools

NEXT STEPS: RISING TOGETHER, LEADING FORWARD

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Session #1

What word, phrase or drawing captures my initial response to this session?



What am I bringing back?



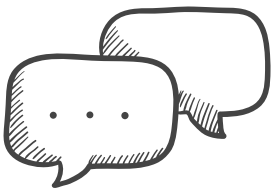
Why does it matter?



How might we use it?



What is one step I am willing to take?



NEXT STEPS: RISING TOGETHER, LEADING FORWARD

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Session #2

What word, phrase or drawing captures my initial response to this session?



What am I bringing back?



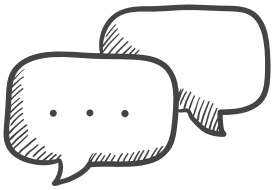
Why does it matter?



How might we use it?



What is one step I am willing to take?



NEXT STEPS: RISING TOGETHER, LEADING FORWARD

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Team Time

What did we bring back?



What connections or patterns do we notice?



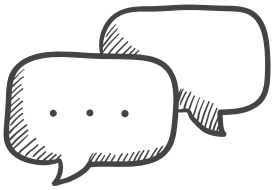
What could work in our school?



Who can help us move this idea into action?



What is one next step we are willing to take?



NEXT STEPS: RISING TOGETHER, LEADING FORWARD

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND FORWARD MOVEMENT

Post-Convening Action Plan

What ideal future do I want to create at my school?

What are 3 realistic goals I can start with?

Who are the people I need to involve?

What is 1 action I can take in the next 30 days?

How will I know I made progress?

How does this connect to my leadership values?

Meet Our Speakers



Dr. Matthew A. Cronin

Professor at George Mason's Costello College of Business

Dr. Matthew A. Cronin (Ph.D., CMU, 2004) Is a professor at George Mason's Costello College of Business. He studies knowledge creation, collaboration and creativity. His work is published in top-tier outlets and was presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. He chaired the Academy of Management Conflict Division in 2016. He coauthored Negotiation: Moving from Conflict to Agreement and The Craft of Creativity, a finalist for the George R. Terry book award. He also advised the US Army Corps of Engineers on collaboration in mega projects.



Nicole Pitre

Professional School Counselor, C.D. Hylton High School

Nicole Pitre has dedicated more than 23 years to supporting students and families through counseling and education. She began her career as a Licensed Professional Counselor, practicing for five years before transitioning to school counseling. Over the past 18 years, she has served as a school counselor at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, beginning in Oklahoma at a PreK-8 school. For the last eight years, she has worked in Prince William County, where she currently serves as a school counselor at C.D. Hylton High School and sponsors the Student-to-Student (S2S) and Student Ambassador programs. Passionate about supporting military-connected students, Nicole is committed to helping students and families successfully transition to new schools and communities while ensuring every student feels connected, supported, and empowered to succeed.



Philip Wilkerson

Employer Engagement Consultant at George Mason's University Career Services

Philip Wilkerson is an Employer Engagement Consultant at George Mason University Career Services, connecting employers with students and alumni to expand internship and career opportunities. He oversees engagement within Media, Arts & Design, Sports & Recreation, Hospitality & Tourism, and Technology & Engineering. A dynamic communicator, Philip is a Distinguished Toastmaster, TEDx speaker, Positive Philter podcast host, and 2024 NACE Mentor of the Year nominee. His honors include GMU Black Alumni Forty Under 40, GMU Employee of the Month, and recognition as a Fairfax County Public Schools Alumni Hall of Fame Honoree in 2025. A proud graduate of Mount Vernon High School and Fairfax County Public Schools, Philip is especially honored to share his journey with current FCPS students. His wife, Maggie, is also an FCPS graduate, having attended West Potomac High School. The son of two retired U.S. Army officers, Philip is married to Maggie and is the proud father of Bennett and Miles.

Meet Our Speakers

Center for Leadership and Intercultural Engagement

Student Leader Team



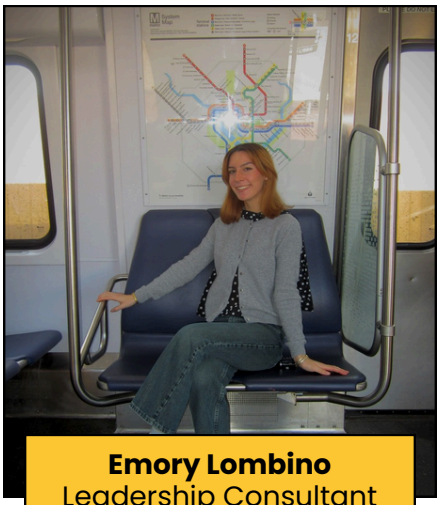
Jihyun Lee
Leadership Consultant



Afsana Ahmadi
Leadership Consultant



Jay Kim
Leadership Consultant



Emory Lombino
Leadership Consultant



Maya Pesjack Richarson
Leadership Consultant



Vicky Gil
Leadership Consultant

Student Senators

Prince William County Schools

- **Alannah McCleerey**, Colgan High School
- **Marli Smith**, Freedom High School
- **Yaseen Haider**, Osbourn Park High School
- **Adara Kryway**, Gainesville High School
- **Amy Offor**, CD Hylton High School
- **Khari Young**, Colgan High School
- **Alyson Dominquez**, Unity Reed High School
- **Cesia Martinez**, Unity Reed High School
- **Johanna Jarrett**, Woodbridge Senior High School
- **Adara Kryway**, Gainesville High School
- **Sakshi Gowda**, Battlefield High School
- **Teaghan Boynton**, Battlefield High School

Convening Notes

Convening Notes

Contacts



Dr. Jennifer Drake Patrick

George Mason University

- *Associate Professor for the College of Education and Human Development*
- *Leadership Team for The Military, Veterans, and Families initiative*

Email:
jdrakepa@gmu.edu



Kimberly S. Simpson, EdS

Prince William County Public Schools

- *Military Achievement Specialist*
- *College, Career, and Student Support*

Email:
simpsoks@pwcs.edu



Daniel Dunham

Virginia Department of Education

- *Military Student and Families Specialist*

Email:
Dan.Dunham@doe.virginia.gov

SPECIAL THANKS

The Center for Leadership and Intercultural Engagement

George Mason University

- *Afsana Ahmadi*
- *Nia Christy*
- *Vicky Gil*
- *Jay Kim*
- *Jihyun Lee*
- *Emory Lombino*
- *Maya Pesjak Richardson*
- *Lisa Snyder*

Post 10 Auxiliary

For your generous donation to provide t-shirts for all participants

The Military, Veterans, and Families Initiative

For your partnership and financial support of the Student Ambassador Convening

Military Order of the Purple Heart

The implementation of the I.M.P.A.C.T Award which serves to recognize the best of our peer leaders









Student Ambassador CONVENING





