

More about your PTSA Board for 2015 - 2016



Cara Leitch – President - president@smithptsa.org

Greetings, my name is Cara Leitch. I have a son in Grade two and a daughter in Pre-K. Just last year, my husband started at Amazon moving our family from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. It has been quite the roller coaster ride but Sammamish and the Lake Washington area has been welcoming and enjoyable. In Canada, I was a Financial Analyst and since moving here I have decided to pursue my MBA in Finance. In Canada I used to play soccer and really need to find a co-rec team here. I look forward to being your President this year and bringing new ideas to our school. Go Dolphins!



Katja Wright – Secretary - secretary@smithptsa.org

Hi! My name is Katja Wright and I live in Sammamish with my 8 year old son, Alex, and my husband, Ben. I am German and I grew up in South Africa - it is a really long story. After a wonderful 11 year career in the tourism industry in South Africa, working for several large Tour Operators and traveling around Southern Africa, I turned my attention to fulfilling the most important and meaningful role of my life: giving birth and raising my precious boy. In 2007 we moved to Dubai for a year for my husband's work before relocating to the United States. We spent 5 years in Atlanta, Georgia and in 2013 relocated to Sammamish - and life is good. I have owned a photography business since 2011, which gives me great pleasure and I enjoy taking care of my family, and baking, a lot!! I look forward to a fun, happy and successful year ahead!



Leanne Brodzinsky – Treasurer - treasurer@smithpts.org

Hi – I'm Leanne Brodzinski – I moved to Sammamish 13 years ago with my husband Paul, I was born and raised in Bothell, WA and he's from London. I graduated from WSU and have been working in the computer industry since. Most recently I left Microsoft and am now an independent consultant, enjoying the flexibility that brings. We have 2 boys the oldest is in 7th grade at IMS after graduating from Smith. My youngest is in the 4th grade. Keeping up with my family and career keeps me hopping but I learned from early preschool days that the boys notice when I am part of their school life and serving on the PTSA has provided a great connection with the school and community. Looking forward to another year on the board.



Jeannette Illsley - VP Communications - communications@smithpts.org

Hi! My name is Jeannette Illsley. I live in Sammamish with my husband Pete and our children Anna (6) and Zach (4). We are originally from Colorado and Utah, lived in Seattle for 3 years after college, in the Los Angeles area for 12 years, in Florida for 7 months and then we finally moved back to Seattle a little over 3 years ago. The projects of my 15+ year career in aerospace engineering range from flying Space Shuttle Payloads to testing F-22 structures to operating the Cassini and Dawn Spacecraft and testing Curiosity rover systems. The highlight was my time as a Flight Test Engineer on-board the C-17 out at Edwards AFB. I am currently on my greatest adventure yet -- motherhood. When I'm not playing Star Wars, Dragons, Legos or Horses or making some craft toy out of toilet paper rolls and pipe-cleaners, I am volunteering as a docent at the Museum of Flight and coordinating events for the Museum's Future Leaders Team. I spent last year developing my skills as webmaster of your PTSA website. In my spare time -- like there's much of that! -- I enjoy cooking, baking, yoga, reading, and gardening. I'm also going to enjoy hanging out with all of you this year!



Suruchi Sharma - VP Fundraising - fundraising@smithpts.org

Hi members of the Smith Family! My name is Suruchi Sharma and I live with my spouse Arvin, my almost 9 year old daughter Gayathri and my 2.5 year old son Abhimanyu "Abhi" in Sammamish for a year now. We moved from Dallas, Texas where we spent the last 12+ years. I am a trained Sociologist by education yet I have had many roles over the course of my career. My recent education is in management with marketing, strategy and entrepreneurship as my dual concentrations. I volunteer for a NJ startup company in their Marketing endeavors apart from volunteering at my kids schools. I love learning new things and consider myself jack of all trades and master of none, in a good sense. My hobbies are more varied than my jobs, I love tinkering with things and fixing them, handywoman at most things, I am a thorough DIYer and love indulging in crafts and recycle & reuse activities. Hoping to see you all soon!!



Kim Leskinen - VP Expenditures - expenditures@smithpts.org

Hi! My name is Kim Leskinen and I live in Sammamish with my 9 year old daughter, Raquel; my 7 year old son, Sebastian; and my husband, Greg. After a 15 years loving my Sales and Marketing career, my daughter was born and I decided take on the role of stay at home mom and never looked back. We just moved to the Sammamish area four years ago and just love it here. After thorough introspection, I have come to the disturbing self-awareness that I am apparently a volunteer-aholic spending a ton of time on the soccer field coaching girls, at Smith like many of us, or doing work for my HOA. When I am not volunteering my time I am working toward finishing writing at least one of the four books that have started...er! I'm an Aquarius who enjoys long walks on the beach... oops, sorry, wrong kind of bio... Anyway, I hope to have a fun, successful year!



Shivani Thakkar - VP Programs - programs@smithpts.org

Hi, I live in Sammamish with my husband and two gorgeous children. My 6yr old goes to Smith and she absolutely loves the school and so do I. I am a Real Estate Broker and the best part of my job is that I get to meet so many new people and get a chance to help them meet their real estate needs. I have a master's degree in computer science with 15+ years of experience in managing and implementing technology projects for the banking industry. I take pride in my ability to manage, research and solve problems. And yes, I am also a Jazzercise fitness instructor and love being outdoors. Thank you for the opportunity, I am looking forward to a great year. Together we can achieve more.

