

Brooke Dominiak

OAK Candidate Statement

Albert Einstein once said, 'If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.' That is how I felt growing up with ADHD, a speech impediment, a learning disorder, a reading disorder and memory/behavioral issues. All my life I believed that I was that fish and felt stupid and that I did not fit in. My learning disabilities made it very difficult for me to fit in both socially and academically and I stood out like a sore thumb. My childhood was different from other kids as it was filled with constant doctor appointments, tutoring sessions, cognitive exercises and extra schooling.

When high school came, I still did not feel smart and was outcasted like a fish out of water. I was not allowed to be in any of the advanced classes due to my learning disabilities despite my good grades. The education system made me that fish who was stupid and could not climb a tree. ODK was really the first society that made me feel accepted and smart by recognizing my own unique strengths and talents. When I was first accepted into ODK I was so happy, proud, and finally felt a purpose bigger than myself. ODK was able to see something in me that I couldn't always see in myself and I want to serve on the Board of Trustees to help other students feel that same sense of acceptance and empowerment! ODK is a society that embraces individuals who, like diverse 'fish', navigate their unique paths against the current and lead their own path. I aspire to serve on ODK's Board of Trustees to contribute to helping shape the society's future, nurture emerging leaders and bring together the circles.

My leadership philosophy resonates with the idea that 'if opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.' It embodies a proactive and entrepreneurial mindset, fostering change through risk-taking, proactive engagement, and effective communication with others. This philosophy is about being a leader who doesn't always rely on existing methods or established paths but actively shapes an organization's own path. My background, leadership principles and new mindset has helped me to reach all my goals in college and I am ready to give back in a way that is bigger than myself. I want to help evoke positive change and make a difference in student's lives. My purpose for running is to help ODK in their future direction and give back to the organization that has given so much to me as I want to contribute to its forward trajectory. Looking ahead, I envision bringing ODK's circles closer, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative community through diverse leadership experiences. My goal is to unite our collective strengths to shape a future that benefits every member of the society.