March 28, 2023

Dear Director Murphy,

My name is Sambartika (Kuhu) Pande, and I am a junior at Pullman High School. I have been a part of Science Olympiad since seventh grade and I started the Science Olympiad Club at Pullman High School. I am writing this letter to you today because I would like to be a student member of the Washington Science Olympiad Board. Science Olympiad has been a huge part of my life since I joined. I have found countless friends in Science Olympiad and have made connections to last a lifetime. However, the most important thing I received from being a part of Science Olympiad is my endless love for science and my determination for change.

I have always loved science since I was a young girl. I was never encouraged at school or by my peers or told that I would excel at it until I joined Science Olympiad. Our advisor Mrs. Marla Haugen encouraged me to join the club and see where it would take me. I became more and more invested in the club to the point where I was (and still am) one of the leading members of Science Olympiad. My passion for science has been a constant part of me and has helped define the person I have turned into today. My ardor for science encourages me to help other people also find their love for science, which is why I want to be part of the Science Olympiad Board. Science Olympiad is an integral part of helping students love science and I want to be able to share that enthusiasm with everybody.

My love for Science Olympiad continued even as I ran out of opportunities to be a part of the club. When I was a freshman in high school there was no Science Olympiad club at our school. I was devastated when I thought that my time competing in Science Olympiad would only last a year, as eight grade was cut off because of the coronavirus. When I learned that Science Olympiad was also available for high schoolers, I put all my energy into starting Science Olympiad at Pullman High School. Against the backdrop of teacher who were not interested in coaching us, a principal who did not care if we have a team, and the support of Mrs. Haugen and my fellow teammates, I prevailed and finally created a Science Olympiad team for Pullman High School in the winter of 2020. If I become a part of the board, I will work to introduce new teams to Science Olympiad and help schools find their footing with this competition. I will help new schools discover the wonders of Science Olympiad and increase the number of teams that are competing.

Science Olympiad will always be something I look upon fondly. This organization has changed my life in so many different ways. If I am able to join the board then I will work hard to make sure that other children in our state also have something that they love as much as I love Science Olympiad. I would appreciate it if you considered me for this position.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sambartika (Kuhu) Pande