



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **GCPS students honored for leadership and community service**

Two Gwinnett County Public Schools students have been honored for their leadership. **Gautam Satya Desai**, a junior at the **Gwinnett School of Math, Science, and Technology**, and **Anu Ramachandiran**, a junior at **Duluth High School**, have been named **2019 Georgia Youth Leadership Award** winners. Gautam and Anu are among a select group of 21 students from high schools across the state recognized for making an impact in their schools and communities through their initiatives, businesses, organizations, and service. Honorees were selected based on demonstrated leadership skills in the areas of community service, entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability, and leadership.

Gautam started teaching chess to his peers when he realized many were playing violent, mindless video games. When he entered high school in 2016, he bootstrapped a non-profit organization called KidsForChess.org, which supports teaching chess to kids of all ages. Chess not only teaches strategic thinking skills but also fosters a competitive spirit and encourages sportsmanship. He worked with local elementary schools to set up week-long, low-cost chess camps during the summer for 25 students; obtained sponsorships and funding from local businesses for the chess sets, trophies, meals and prizes; and recruited his friends as volunteers to teach chess. He is finalizing arrangements for more chess camps in Summer 2019 with the support of the local community, and plans to expand the organization regionally, then nationally, and internationally by using social media to expand awareness of his organization. Gautam is extremely passionate about raising funds for other social causes through his chess workshops and donated the proceeds of his first camps to Save the Children, 21st Century Leaders, and Rainbow Village, which provides shelter for women and children in need.



L-R: Anu Ramachandiran and David Felfoldi of SHERPA Global



L-R: Gautam Satya Desai and Stephen Vault of WellStar Health Systems

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**THE MISSION OF GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
*is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.*

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It is the policy of Gwinnett County Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability in any employment practice, educational program, or any other program, activity, or service.

**2010 and 2014 Winner of**



*-more-*

Anu is the founder of Impact Atlanta, an innovative mobile application that helps nonprofits provide disadvantaged families with the specific resources they need. Impact Atlanta has raised nearly \$6,500 in donations since being published on the iTunes Store and also has received state and national recognition for its impact in the community. The inspiration for the application came when Anu noticed a powerful trend during her time volunteering in the community — no one was identifying what these recipients of charity truly needed— clothing, feminine hygiene products, and school supplies. After teaching herself Swift and Xcode, she created an app and partnered with Walmart to simplify the donation process for hard-to-access, essential items. The app, which has more than 2,000 users, empowers users by allowing them to select exactly what products they want to donate and what nonprofit organization(s) will receive their donations. Anu also has created Impact Atlanta Application LLC, a corporation that focuses on larger monetary donations from businesses. She also serves as the Youth Representative of Meals by Grace and sits on the Rainbow Village Millennial Advisory Panel. She also has developed and is beta testing Memory Technology, a website that helps Alzheimer patients increase cognitive abilities and stimulate memory through generated questionnaires and individualized virtual games. She was awarded the 1st place 2018 Women in Technology award for her initiative. In addition, Anu writes political commentary on current events through her own outlets and teen magazines such as Teen Ink, Odyssey, and Girlspring.