

Name: **Jen Martinez**

What is your current role with PTA? **Florida PTA President-Elect**

What was your first PTA volunteer position? **Kindergarten Room Mom at Crystal Lakes Elementary, Boynton Beach in 1998.**

What was the most challenging obstacle that you encountered on the path to your current role? **The deaths of my parents. My parents played a crucial role in watching my children as I traveled for many of my PTA programs, events and conferences. It was hard to adjust to life without them in general, let alone when it came time for PTA work.**

How did you overcome this obstacle? **Fortunately, I had wonderful people surrounding me. I was lucky to have great bosses that believed in the volunteer work I was doing and allowed me to have a flexible schedule. I am truly blessed to have a very supportive family. These factors enabled me to continue my path.**

Describe your happiest moment as a PTA leader. **This is a difficult question. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to have many happy moments. The most recent happy moment would be winning the election for the position of Florida PTA President-Elect.**

What advice would you offer to a budding leader? **I would share that I encourage all budding leaders to be flexible, open-minded, inquisitive and inclusive. Be flexible. This allows for new ideas and adjustments when needed. Remember that everything does not always go as planned, but that does not mean we should stop doing what we are doing or that we are not a team. Being flexible proves as a team we can accomplish our goals. Be open-minded. This allows for sharing, learning and growing. As a leader, it is important to continue to grow. We do not always know everything or the best way to do something. Having an open mind is not just about new ideas or knowing something, it can even be a new way of doing or thinking about something. We do not all see through the same lens. Keeping an open mind also gives us a chance to see something from a different perspective. Be inquisitive. Never be afraid to ask questions or ask for help. This will allow for collaboration and additional chances to grow as a leader. Be inclusive. This is key as everyone should have an opportunity to have a seat at the table. These are great tools for any budding leader.**

What advice would you offer to a PTA leader seeking to attain your current position? Stay the course. Although you might not get the position you want at the time you feel is right, be open minded and use this opportunity to learn a different position to gain more knowledge and experience. This will help you to be more well-rounded as a PTA leader as you continue to move your path forward. This unexpected change in course could prove very beneficial in your PTA leadership journey. Allowing the additional time for growth strengthens your flexibility as a PTA leader.

Looking back to the beginning of your PTA leadership journey, if you were given the opportunity, is there anything that you would do differently, and if so please elaborate. Honestly, I would not change anything. I have had the honor to experience many different positions throughout my PTA career. These positions have helped me prepare for and continue my journey. More important are the amazing, kind hearted, passionate and dedicated people I have met along the way. I am thankful that many have become a part of my extended family.

What's next for you? My next step is the role of Florida PTA President. I will be installed July 19, 2020 at the annual Florida PTA Leadership Convention at Innisbrook.

Which of the figures below best reflects your leadership path? Figure A



Figure A

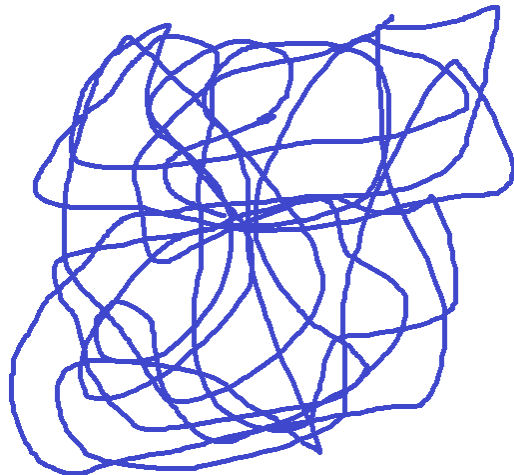


Figure B