



Scarlett Lopez, *LU '23*

I have genuinely appreciated my time with Leadership U. Starting at the beginning of summer week, meeting people from different schools was wonderful. I remember sophomore year having a desire to meet students from the other Howard County schools, and Leadership U has helped me fulfill this wish. And even better, I met like-minded students who also have the values of high-achievement and dedication. Splitting into our final groups for the fall semester was nerve-wracking but ultimately, I was happy with my team. While it was awkward at first, and difficult to figure out dynamics, my team pulled together and began to take initiative with ideas and planning. We faced challenges along the way, one major one being communication. Between meetings our group chat was empty, with one-sided texts that no one answered. This lasted for quite some time, until we addressed the issue and set a goal to communicate more frequently. Another challenge we faced was focus. Because all of us are such high-achievers and in AP and GT classes as well as extra-curricular activities, staying focused during meetings was hard at times. Leadership U has taught me several skills and demonstrated how to respond to different situations. I have most appreciated: meeting students from other schools, learning how to navigate unproductive or awkward group dynamics, and building a community outside of my school with supportive adults and diverse peers.