

RESHMA KHAN

ENERGETIC MARKETING LEADER

letsgo@reshmaforteaneck.org | 201.600.6965

Award-winning, innovative marketer with a 20+ year background across B2B and B2C verticals recognized for award-winning, data-driven initiatives in driving business growth. Highly strategic creative thinker with savvy communication and partnership skills with experience in product and brand marketing. Experienced people leader who can harmonize cross-functional team performance and mentor individuals for personal excellence. Previous experience working for Fortune 500 companies. Currently business owner based in Teaneck.

WORK EXPERIENCE

I spent most of my corporate career working for Fortune 500 companies in Insurance, Financial Services and Entertainment industries. I held a variety of Marketing roles leading the design of customer experience and managing communications through cross-collaborations with Product, Research, Legal, Data Sciences and Finance teams.

My greatest achievement was in successfully stewarding an innovative demand generation platform at a large NYC bank, which won our team the Chairman's Award for Innovation (Chairman's Hall of Fame).

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

- Appointed member, Advisory Board for Community Relations (ABCR)
- Appointed member, Municipal Open Space Trust (MOST)
- Founding Girl Scout Mom of the Darul Islah Girl Scouts Troupe
- Founder and Director – American Changemakers youth mentorship group & The Nightingales Junior Choir
- Co-petitioner, co-plaintiff, Marketing Lead and Activist - One Town One Vote, a people's movement to move local municipal elections from May to November
- Voter Registration Assistance/Volunteer – League of Women Voters, Teaneck
- President – PTO at Academy of Greatness and Excellence
- Volunteer at Helping Hands Relief, Mom's Food Pantry and Darul Islah
- Founding President - Toastmaster's Public speaking club at Northwestern University

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

- MLK Jr Committee award for Shared Humanity/Community Service
- Woman of the Year Award from Women of Wisdom of Teaneck International Film Festival
- Civic leadership award from the Cultural society of Bergen County
- Community service recognition from Academy of Greatness and Excellence for launching innovative PTO initiatives and selfless service to the school
- Chairman's award for Innovation
- The "Yeck Scholar" award for Direct Marketing

EDUCATION

Northwestern University | Evanston, IL

M.S. in Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) - **Medill and Kellogg Schools** | Graduated Top of Class, Outstanding Student Award, Student Tutor (Statistics)
(<https://www.medill.northwestern.edu/>)

T. A. Pai Management Institute (TAPMI) | India

MBA in Marketing | Salutatorian | First female Chairperson of BrandScan, prestigious annual market research event for corporate clients
(<https://www.manipal.edu/mu.html>)

University of Madras | India

Bachelor of Commerce with a double major: Business and Economics | Valedictorian | Ranked first in Economics among 3M+ students | Secretary of the Student Council
(<https://www.unom.ac.in/>)

QUESTIONS

1. What is the role of a town council member? Why are you running for Teaneck council?

The role of a council member is that of a leader that represents all constituents equitably in making decisions and authoring policies that work well for the present and future residents of Teaneck.

I am running because I believe I can make a difference in bringing meaningful change to Teaneck through my positive energy, problem solving aptitude and innovative thinking.

2. How will you represent constituents from all of the diverse groups who live here? As a council member what would you do to promote harmony and unity in the town?

As a candidate with a multi-cultural, global experience and a breadth of business and activism experience, I believe that I can represent diverse resident groups through inclusive engagement and by celebrating diversity. As a resident who has lived here for almost 20 years and a natural problem-solver, I am confident I can find solutions to the town's pressing issues with equity and fairness. I welcome dialog with all our resident communities that make up our beautiful town, so we can solicit feedback (listen) and implement (act) some of the great suggestions offered by our residents for various town issues.

3. Tell us about a time where you worked through a challenge with a team of people who did not agree on the best solution. How did you navigate conflicting views? How did you resolve the challenge?

Having worked in corporate marketing for several years, I encountered team situations where there was disagreement on budget allocation. As a leader, I had to ensure everyone is aligned on the common goal, listened to different perspectives so people feel 'heard', used data analyses and insights to prove effectiveness of a particular solution and then came up with an effective path forward. Also it is important in such situations, to make stakeholders including the dissenters, feel ownership in the final solution so you can achieve the team's ultimate goal. Needless to say the marketing budget was allocated and optimized in a seamless manner delivering team synergy.

4. Should the council engage in international issues?

I don't believe Teaneck council has any bearing on international issues or if international governments are soliciting direct feedback/support from the Teaneck council, therefore we must not engage in international issues that do not fall within the purview of our municipal jurisdiction.

5. Should the council meet more often? What ideas do you have to best engage Teaneck residents? Are there problems with good and welfare and how should the council address them?

The Teaneck council should continue its current schedule of meeting once or twice a month – however they should have special meetings as and when required for discussion which is vitally important for our residents. Resident input should be welcomed and not curtailed during Good and welfare. Furthermore, subcommittees should be opened for transparency to the public. Councilmembers must take great ideas wherever they come from and solicit input from all residents. Public comment during Good and welfare should be unlimited, since this is an outlet for the public to engage with their elected officials and listen to fellow residents. And this free speech is a cornerstone of democracy.

6. How do you propose raising additional revenue for the town without increasing property taxes?

As a leader on the council, I will advocate for residents by focusing on 1) revenue optimization and 2) cost-savings. A closer look at the rateables in use can reveal a better sense of areas where town revenue can be enhanced from non-residential tax paying entities while also telling us how certain expenditures can be controlled.

Revenue opportunities may also be available by promoting Teaneck to newer retail establishments (ideally minority and women-owned businesses, local resident-owners), revitalizing our downtown areas for different demographics such as families, seniors and youth through judicious, resident-friendly mixed-use development and bringing aesthetic streetscapes that help promote foot-traffic. Many federal, state and philanthropic grants are available for such economic redevelopment.

In addition, Teaneck can also be promoted as a hub for start-ups due to our proximity to NYC and Silicon alley, which can boost our economy. We can partner with non-profit organizations to capitalize the rich diversity of Teaneck's natural (Argonne Park is one of the largest at 54 acres), historic (civil rights era milestones and markers) and cultural landmarks (jewels like the Teaneck International Film Festival and the American Legion Drive farmers markets).

7. What is “responsible development”? What are your thoughts about the new Master Plan, particularly regarding new housing and retail, as well as the use of AINRs and PILOTS as a development tool?

“Responsible development” means development that is planned with public input including resident points of view – in the case of Teaneck, neighborhood character must be preserved and we must embrace environmental sustainability as a goal for our town. Residents have been opposing the improper use of the AINR designation (specific categories are prescribed by the LRHL law). They have spoken out against the massive development planned for the American Legion Drive area. Besides PILOTS are to be used to attract developers in areas that would not attract private investment. The continuing use of PILOTS in Teaneck also has potentially disadvantageous effect on the school district.

8. What do you think needs to be done to assure sufficient affordable housing in Teaneck?

Not only is the cost of living high in our town, but affordable housing also continues to be a challenge for several demographics. Our town’s Master Plan is currently being updated – this is a prime opportunity for us to consider updating our zoning laws to include sufficient affordable housing options including ADUs for those who may need it, so we increase resident retention (rather than migration due to higher cost of living). Secondly, we can implement rent control and rent stabilization measures to protect tenants and young families. Besides many grants are available for the council to advocate for affordable housing options for residents.

9. What improvements would you like to see in our green spaces, parks, and recreational facilities?

Teaneck is home to several beautiful parks (Harte Park is small and intimate for younger children), some of which are under-utilized by residents due to neglect. Given my experience on the Municipal Open Space Trust (MOST) and frequent interactions with the Environmental Commission, I believe we must focus on upkeep and maintenance of all parks, but also explore other ideas such as adding biking lanes, creating ADA-compliant walkable trails with signage, using solar lighting, creating pollinator and rain (harvesting) gardens, reducing use of pesticides in our parks, working to eliminate PFAs in our water, bringing town-wide wifi – all with an aim to prioritize community wellness and environmental sustainability.

10. What is your position on cannabis in Teaneck?

My position on cannabis is that we need data insights and research to understand the relative merits of how much additional income it can bring to our town’s coffers.

Based on this data and critical resident input, the council leadership must decide if we can create limited zones where cannabis dispensaries can be established.

11. How can Teaneck best serve the needs of its senior citizens? What changes, if any, would you propose?

Senior citizens are **wonderful receptacles of love, wisdom and history** and we must do all we can to increase their social connection to overcome any health or mobility challenges. Some ideas I have to serve this population include fostering the current senior programs at Rodda center and adding mobile health clinics and/or tele-doc facilities, making downtown areas especially Cedar lane more senior friendly, providing financial and nutrition counselling/workshops, starting community meal-trains so seniors can partake in homemade food from their neighbors, bringing school children to meet and greet seniors (reading programs) at centers and ensuring seniors have a block buddy who checks on their health and wellness periodically. A lot can be done in partnering with the Age-friendly groups in town.

12. What is the ideal relationship between the council members and the town manager?

A **collaborative partnership** is the best way to describe it. Council manager reports to the town council but must be given the freedom and flexibility to make their own decisions and function as a “Head of Operations” for the town so our town can thrive with their effective leadership.

13. It is our understanding that the current police chief may soon retire. What are the qualities of a police chief you would look for in a future candidate for the position of chief of police? What input would the council have in hiring the new police chief?

The Chief of Police role is much like any other leadership roles at the helm of an organization. To succeed the candidate must have strong leadership skills including solid integrity, bright emotional intelligence, effective communication, visionary thinking, bias for solutioning, business acumen, interpersonal skills, collaborative mindset, innovative outlook, decisiveness and accountability. In addition the Chief should have a pulse on Teaneck community, be abreast of town happenings, and network with local spheres of influence. The Council must ensure the candidate is aligned with the goals and ideologies of the new council to unite communities through building bridges.

14. How do you feel about term limits on council and committees?

I feel that council and committees should have term limits so that there is succession planning for roles and innovative thinking to refresh government policies and initiatives.

15. What aspects of Teaneck do you value most and why?

Teaneck has been my home for 18 years – which is most of my adult life. I value the town for its location, great schools, access to NYC and houses of worship, beautiful parks and quiet serenity of the neighborhoods. Most of all I value the rich multi-cultural ethnic composition of our town – my neighbors from all over the world (Senegal, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Pakistan, Israel, Egypt, Trinidad..the list goes on) which makes it possible for me to raise my family with cross-cultural understanding to embrace diversity in thought, lifestyles and cuisines!