

A B O U T

PRERNA CHAKKINGAL

Perna Chakkingal is a 17-year-old student who uses her voice to be a prodigious powerhouse of change and influence.

An accomplished public speaker, Perna has given three Tedx Talks discussing deeply rooted societal issues and her experience as a young woman of color. Her most popular talk, “Your Difference Is Your Power,” has over 125,000 views and was recognized as one of 2022’s Top 100 Most Popular Tedx Talks. Perna was also selected to be one of 40 speakers at the Global Health Leaders Conference with Johns Hopkins University, where she discussed the importance of diversity in clinical lab research to achieve more equitable, representative healthcare in the United States.

Perna uses her talents to give a voice to underrepresented populations. She’s an active music therapy volunteer, utilizing various instruments to promote learning and communication skills in children with neurodevelopmental differences. She’s also a host and council member for the Saturday Light Brigade, a student-led regional podcast collaborative, where she molds the organization’s strategy to reach and encourage representation of young voices.

In addition to her advocacy, Perna was selected as one of 100 students for the Disney Dreamers Academy, a highly selective program that aims to uplift students and provide networking opportunities with celebrated professionals from across the world.

