Isha Chakala (Youth) Honorable Mention

Title: My Pandemic Experience

Everyone faced downhill due to the pandemic. A lot of people faced challenges, especially the essential workers. But, let's also take a look at people like you and me. I kept myself healthy. I made sure to do the right thing even when I was tempted not to. I have been able to keep myself occupied during this long period of time.

At first, when I heard of lock down I was very nervous. I was scared, I thought I would not be able to survive. But, soon I realized that this was an opportunity for me to use my creativity to do different things. I discovered new talents and hobbies. A lot of things changed during lockdown and they were not always so fun. When school became virtual, I thought it would be great to stay at home, but as time progressed I began to miss school. Being virtual was incredibly difficult and school was no fun. Not being in school made me very upset and due to the pandemic, field trips were canceled and completing work and projects became harder. I barely ever got to see my classmates.

One of the most important things I learned is that I have a lot of power within. I had thought everything fun was strictly cut off, but eventually I started to entertain myself. I realized that I decided what was fun and what was not. Prior to the pandemic, I took many things for granted. I didn't really look around and took a minute to be grateful for everything that I have. But, alongside all the bad things the pandemic had caused, it also taught me some very valuable lessons such as, gratitude, appreciation, self control and many more. And I hope to continue to see the best in everything.