

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Pooja Vijayvargiya
4020 Driftwood
Enid OK 73703

School: Enid High School

Career Goal: Physician

College: Northwestern University

GPA: 4.0



Leadership Experience:

Pooja has served as the Vice-President and President of her local HOSA chapter. She was the Vice-President and President of the Student Council.

Volunteer Experiences:

Pooja has volunteered with the March of Dimes. She helped raise money by going to local businesses and asking for donations. She has been a volunteer tutor for four years at her school.

Excerpts from Pooja's Essay:

When I joined HOSA in ninth grade as the youngest member of the club, I was just excited to be a part of something, to spread my skinny arms and see if I could fly higher than anyone else. However, I soon realized that leaders were everywhere. Some were hidden behind nerdy glasses or track uniforms, but they all had something special. Part of what made them special was their experiences from different activities. I have grown enough to realize those people gained certain attributes from their experiences, but the experiences only nurtured something that was already there. Similarly, my valuable HOSA experiences and fond memories have brought out the best qualities in me that have not only made me a better leader and student, but also a better Pooja.

My most meaningful experience was by far the HOSA National Convention in Dallas, Texas, where I won the gold medal and the national champion title. While the gold medal is nice to hang on a trophy shelf, it was the week before the actual competition that still remains with me. While I persistently studied months before the competition, something came over me the day my fellow school HOSA competitors and I checked into the Dallas hotel. Everywhere I looked I could see student after student with books in their hands. It was either the pressure or the lack of confidence I had in myself that prompted me to go into a study mode so intense that all apprehensions floated away from my mind. Only one word can describe my state: **focus**. During the five days before my test, I reviewed my two books, notes, and note cards everywhere I went, whether it was dangerously walking to the location of Kennedy's assassination or while clumsily eating a panini in a café. But the most fascinating part of the experience was how **composed** I remained. I was so calm I almost began to worry! But I didn't because I found this strange undiscovered confidence. I **trusted myself** to live up to my full potential when it finally mattered: test day. But even with the confidence, I didn't let myself smugly assume anything, not even when they said, "... and the gold goes to Pooja Vijayvargiya ...". The shiny disk dangling from my neck didn't signify "first place" for me; it represented a newer focused, composed, and confident me.

I know I probably should have mentioned the leadership skills I gained from meetings I conducted as President or the compassion I felt while visiting local senior centers, but that one week in Dallas was honestly the greatest experience I have had throughout high school.