The Eye of a Pandemic

In my perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic did not start until everything shut down. One day, I kept hearing about a new virus on the news and seeing articles pop up with the headlines reading, "COVID-19 is spreading in China" or something of the sort. I did not think much of it, since unordinary headlines popped up from time to time; I thought it was something that would pass in a short amount of time. I had thought it was another common cold that was not much of a big deal. All of these thoughts that reassured my viewpoint had been proved wrong when I heard a familiar voice speak on the intercom while I was in school. It was the principal saying, "I am sure that you have seen it all on the news regarding COVID-19. Unfortunately, we will be closing school down hopefully for a couple of weeks…everyone will need to empty their lockers and take everything since we do not know when we will be back." We suspected that it would only take a week, maybe two weeks at maximum. We were all wrong. A few days turned into a few weeks, and a few weeks turned into a couple of months. The way we learned had changed. For the first time in decades, we were not allowed to learn in person, but instead online. We were required to have our video cameras on, and watch our teachers run us through the material through our screens. It completely took us away from the social aspect of a normal high school life, and it led us to develop unhealthy habits in order to cope with this sudden pause on our high school experience. For example, I used to be actively involved in sports, and ever since quarantine, I have not gotten consistently involved since then. As juniors at the time, we had hoped that we could get through the rest of the year and go back to a sense of normality in our senior year. Fortunately for everyone, we had the option to go back to in person senior year, but it still was not the same. The experience was not the same at all. We

had to wear masks, walk in a certain direction to avoid overcrowded hallways, and stand six feet apart. At the time, I tried going back because I craved for the experience that I once had; the laughter, smiles, meaningful moments, the memories. I was absolutely miserable, and I dreaded coming to school everyday because it felt like a prison. I ended up staying online for the rest of the year, which gave me a lot of time to myself. I have heard people saying that being online was the worst thing, but for me it was not too bad at all. I had gotten used to waking up everyday and doing my classes online. Even though being online was not the worst thing in the world, it was certainly inconvenient in regards to how I wanted to experience my senior year of high school as well as my first year of college.

- Anonymous