**6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom. (350 word max.)**

Environmental science has always inspired me. In fifth grade, I started a petition to the school district that would permit students to sit outside during lunchtime. This would be my first and only time in the principal’s office. Here I found myself explaining the importance of exposing children to nature in cultivating future environmental stewards.

In middle school I took Nature Studies as an elective, and in high school I have continued to pursue the subject of environmental science as an AP Environmental Science student and volunteer. Time spent on weekends at the Pacific Grove Natural History Museum has taught me the importance and value of environmental education and citizen science. From spying on the secret lives of phytoplankton through museum microscopes, to laughing under eucalyptus trees with visitors as a monarch docent, to working with children during Science Saturday educational events, my experiences outside of the traditional classroom have only affirmed my love for and curiosity about the natural world. But love and curiosity alone cannot fix environmental issues like climate change, habitat loss, and pollution.

As one of three student representatives for my school district’s Environmental Responsibility Team, I have fostered further conversation and action around environmental sustainability and science education. Most recently I have helped introduce and adopt a district-wide recycling program, which I presented at a meeting attended by all the teachers, staff, and administrators in the Carmel Unified School District. As co-president of my high school’s environmental club, I am currently organizing educational events in collaboration with Sustainable Carmel and NOAA’s Surfrider Foundation. Through awareness, advocacy, and activism, I have learned to defend what inspires me and keeps me curious. This September, I organized a climate strike protesting the lack of legislation to tackle climate change. I reached out to over six different high schools from my county and proposed a plan to take it to the streets. And that we did with a crowd of over 100 students.