



## ***CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CHAMPIONS .....***

***BY LION GLORIA MATHUR***

***OUTSTANDING YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR***

The MD-2 Texas Lions proudly celebrated another year of youth excellence as the **Opportunities for Youth** contests were held virtually on **May 16th**, marking the **fifth consecutive year** the competitions have been conducted online. This annual event continues to uplift and empower our youths by giving them a platform to showcase their leadership, insight, and commitment to service through three major competitions: the **Diabetes Awareness Essay Contest**, the **Drug Awareness Speech Contest**, and the **Outstanding Youth Award Contest**.

Each contest challenged participants to explore timely and meaningful issues affecting today's youth, while also offering them the opportunity to apply for the prestigious **Texas Lions Opportunities for Youth Scholarships**, awarding **\$3,000 for 1st place**, **\$2,000 for 2nd place**, and **\$1,000 for 3rd place**.

The 1<sup>st</sup> place winners for each of the three contests delivered their winning essays & speech at the Texas Lions State convention on May 30<sup>th</sup> in Odessa, TX at the Opportunities for Youth Award Luncheon .

**Diabetes Awareness Essay Contest: *Topic: Managing Diabetes and the Emotional Impact on Adolescents.*** Contestants were asked to discuss the specific challenges adolescents face managing Diabetes while balancing school, work, and social life, potentially leading to emotional distress or burnout and identify coping mechanisms and available resources.

**Drug Awareness Speech Contest: *Topic: The Impact of Weight Loss Drugs on Adolescents .*** Contestants were asked to weigh the benefits and risks of prescription drugs for adolescents specifically examine the potential benefits of medication like GLP antagonists in treating obesity in adolescents. They were asked , the risks and side effects in gastrointestinal issues, gallbladder disease pancreatitis etc., analyze the impact of these drugs on adolescent growth development etc. and is weight loss the safest and most effective way of promoting adolescents health.

**Outstanding Youth Award Contest: *Topic: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Its Impact on Education.*** Contestants were asked to discuss /focus on AI in Education . Examine the potential of AI in personalized learning with emphasis on educational inequalities . Contestants are evaluated on high school grade point average, 750 word essay, personal biographical information statement, three letters of recommendation, performance of community service, leadership experience/participation and a personal interview.

**Winners :**

**Diabetes Awareness Essay**

**1<sup>st</sup> Mia Salazar (2S5)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Gael Santiago Alonso (2A3)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Anthony Hernandez III (2S4)**

**Drug Awareness Speech**

**1<sup>st</sup> Aiden Neel (2S3)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sarah Jaslaine Salazar (A2)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Hilson Baral (2X1)**

**Outstanding Youth Award**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sebastian Zapata ( 2A3)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Mackenzy Roberts ( 2S3)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Reedipti Sedain (2X1)**

**Congratulations to the champions, and to every student who stepped forward to share their voice, their vision, and their leadership.**

