**Essay 3**

**What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?**

DRAFT 1:

3.49 out of 5 is Indonesia’s digital literacy rate according to Indonesia’s Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. It wasn’t until my grandma lost IDR10 million from clicking a link on a text message that I realized how much that rate can be improved.

The need for digital literacy became apparent when the COVID pandemic hit. Underage children were behaving unethically on social media platforms, students didn’t know how to utilize basic cloud services for online school, and people became more exposed to hoaxes. Witnessing this alarming need inspired me to take action. I came across Gendigital Academy’s (GenD) open recruitment on my friend’s Instagram story. Right then, I knew I found a solution to my desire: joining an organization that gives a chance to underprivileged children to discover the frontiers of technology.

At GenD, we curated technology-related topics for underprivileged kids that we mentored: Shella, Ilma, and Syirla. At first, I had to constantly check up on them to see how they’re doing with the topic. I showed them that I was also there as their friend and that it’s okay to not understand everything the first time. As time passed by, they started texting me for questions and help regarding the topic.

As my relationship with the kids grew deeper, I became more and more passionate, even doing things I wouldn’t do, like talking in front of a camera. Watching them grow from knowing nothing about Python to coding a simple calculator was what gave me joy. The kids did not only experience growth in their skills and knowledge, but also in their love and eagerness to learn.

The GenD team received a MURI (Indonesian Museum World Record) award for implementing the largest digital literacy training for over 4000 kids all over Indonesia through Zoom. Even so, I felt like the weekly Saturday tutoring created more impact for the kids. I was able to pay attention to each of their strengths and weaknesses. Not only that, I was also able to watch them grow as an individual and no award can ever replace that.