

## **Democracy in Action**

“Show me what democracy looks like!”

“This is what democracy looks like!”

“Show me what democracy looks like!”

“This is what democracy looks like!”

I heard this loud chant on January 21, 2017 at the Women’s March in Washington DC. On that day, my mom and I took an early morning flight from Detroit to Baltimore. We met my uncle and his friend at the airport who drove down from Philadelphia to pick us up. From there, we went to a Metro train station, which was in Silver Springs, Maryland. I did not know what to expect, I had never done anything like this before! All along the way, starting in Detroit, we had seen excited women (and some men) in cute pink “pussycat” hats.

Once we arrived at the Metro station, I was surprised to see how many people were actually there. This was still pretty far from the Washington DC march. It took us a very long time just to get a Metro card in order to get on the train. The train was packed! Even though

there were so many people, everyone was very kind and loving. Even strangers made sure that I was doing okay.

After many stops we arrived at the Mall in DC, people were cheering and excited to be there together! Going up the Metro station escalator to get out, the chants were echoing and filling all the spaces. At the Mall, everyone was gathered peacefully in groups. The crowds kept getting bigger and bigger. Some were dressed up in costumes, some were drumming, and some were singing beautiful songs. Others were shouting slogans. Important Washington D.C. monuments, like the Capitol building, Washington Monument and many museums were nearby.

At the rally, most were carrying signs to show how they felt about improving the country and our new president. I had a pink and black sign about "Girl Power" that people thought was very cool! It means that girls can achieve anything they want. People started chanting and marching slowly, but everyone seemed to be having fun. "Oh, this is what a march is!" I thought. I wondered if the President could see us

from the White House. We did stop to eat and warm up but continued marching for many hours.

My uncle explained to me that our country is special because we have the freedom to say what we want about the government and even the president. It is called Freedom of Speech. I learnt that in many other countries people do not have this right and can even be jailed for saying what they believe. This made me feel proud to be an American and I now understand what democracy can look like.