

Austin Combs-St. Dominic School-Elder High School

My name is Austin Combs. I am the 4th child in our family to go to St. Dominic and will follow my brother's footsteps to Elder. My siblings are 10-14 years older than me, so I've had a lot of great teachers in my life. I would like to say I'm a well-rounded person. I grew up in a loving home with a lot of generous people. My mom is a nurse, so I was exposed to a lot of her charity work at a very young age. My siblings did a lot of volunteer work and I was there every step of the way.

At school, I have a lot of friends. I play football, basketball and lacrosse. My parents taught me to be nice to everyone. Throughout the years I have befriended people that were left out, shy, or had no friends. When I have a birthday party I invite everyone because I don't want anyone to feel left out. I am a good friend to everyone. I volunteer as much as I can at school to help the teacher. I am a loyal teammate and I have the back of every player on my team.

I have done a lot of volunteer work throughout the years. I helped my mother collect and deliver clothes and personal items to the homeless. I would visit and play games with the Nuns at Sisters of Charity. We helped stock the food pantry and I spent a lot of time visiting people at the blind center. I currently volunteer from time to time at Matthew 25 Ministries because it feels good to help. I also help make knit caps for the prevention of and awareness of the Shaken Baby Syndrome. It's real easy to make, and then they are delivered to the hospitals for all the babies in the ICU.

I think I'm most proud to be part of my family. About 11/2 years ago my mom saw on TV that they were in desperate need for Foster parents. My mom didn't hesitate and picked up the phone and called right away. After all the classes and home studies I wasn't sure at first. However, last May when we got our first baby I knew this was what we were called to do. We do babies newborn-2. I help out a lot, especially when we have more than one. My mom counts on me and so do the babies. I even change diapers! Now I can't imagine our life without a little one around. It's so much fun at night when everyone gets home and we all get to play with the babies together. I also started my own little charity. I've been collecting used suitcases for Foster care children. It all started when we would send babies back home or to family members. My mom did not have the heart to put all their belongings she bought them into a bag. We ended up giving every piece of our luggage away. I had an idea to put it on face book and then I went to neighbors and family to collect. Hamilton County thought it was a great idea and they could give them out to children, especially the older ones who have a hard time with carrying a bag. It just makes me feel good knowing I helped another person.