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Aubrey Rose Scholarship

“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.” -Charles Dickens

This quote by Charles Dickens is a quote I wish to live by. I believe that God put me on this planet for a purpose. I try my hardest each day to be a living advocate of God, by helping others and trying to make their lives better. Whether I just flash a smile someone's way, or do volunteer work with others, I try to brighten the day of everyone I meet.

Since I was young, I was always taught that helping others is a key to living a successful and happy life. When I make others happy, I myself feel truly joyful. My school, Mercy Montessori, also strongly believes in service work. Every other Wednesday, we split up into groups to do service work in our community. One place we volunteer is at Gorman Farm. We help the farmers clean animal pens, weed the gardens, and do other tasks around the farm. Another place we go to is Stepping Stones. I personally love going to stepping stones because I love working with the disabled. We help the grounds keepers work around the facility and keep it clean. We also eat lunch with the children, and play with them after lunch. The last place we work with is Mercy Neighborhood Ministries. This past week, we delivered presents to the less fortunate. For many people, those would be the only Christmas presents they received. It made me feel glad that I was able to make someone's holidays a little better.

Although I love volunteering, I believe that helping others is more than that. When I was very young, my mom, and later my sister, was diagnosed with Bipolar. She became very sick, staying in bed for long periods of time and falling into deep depressed states. For a while, my grandmother had to come live with my family to help my dad take care of my sister and I. She

eventually became better, but still fights some rough battles. I try always to support my mother and sister through their illnesses. When my mom and sister become depressed, I always try to either cheer them up, or just comfort them. I listen to what they have to say and never criticize them for anything they may say or do. I understand that their bipolar makes them act different than others, and I accept them for all they are. When they are manic, I go along with them, cleaning like crazy or helping them try to accomplish any crazy task they come up with. Although they can be difficult to live with at times, I try my hardest to understand and accept them for who they are.

My mother and sister are not the only people in my family who I do my best to be helpful toward. On August 29th, 2006, my cousin Ava was born. She was my very first little cousin, but she was no ordinary baby. She was born with a severe physical disability called hydrocephalus. It is an unbalanced translocation of genes five and six. She has too much five and not enough six. She recently turned seven, and is unable to walk, talk, or even chew and swallow food. When my aunt had two more children, it became slightly more difficult for her to take care of Ava. Whenever I would visit, I would help my aunt by either taking care of her other two children, or helping with Ava. But Ava did not only spark my love of working with disabled children. She inspired me further than that.

When my aunt would try to get professional pictures of Ava, the photographers were very insensitive to her disability. They would try to get her to smile, sit up, and do other things that she was incapable of doing. Every picture of her turned out the same, her sitting in her wheelchair, not looking at the camera. Once my aunt finally got a picture of Ava smiling, I knew what I wanted to do when I grew up. I want to combine my love of photography and my love of disabled children and open my very own photography business for the handicapped. I hope to

come up with ways to make the people I take pictures of be able to do things like sitting up, or take the pictures at angles which they are looking at the camera. I hope that I can bring joy to the families of the handicapped through photography.

These events and many others have motivated me to devote my life to helping others. I hope that through the course of my life, I can continue to help others and inspire others to do the same. Whether I am just flashing a smile someone's way, or volunteering with others, I hope to brighten the days of everyone I meet.