

Allison Bailey St. William School

My name is Allison Bailey and I am 14 years old. I am the third child of five children. My parents have instilled in all of us children to try to help our community and church. My older siblings have worked with Habitat for Humanity and since they were in grade school and high school, and now they are in college and still working with the program here at St. William Interfaith Hospitality Network. This is where my story begins. When my brother and sister would go help out with Interfaith I would tag along. I asked Marilyn Cummings if there was something I could do to help out. She said, "Absolutely Allison." So sometimes I would help clean or do whatever was needed. And other times I would get to play with the children that were staying with their families at St. William. I liked this best because the children really liked the attention and it me made feel really warm inside. I knew I was helping.

I have also done Beautiful Lengths. We have known of some family and friends with cancer. And I know as a girl, that women and girls love to mess with their hair. So I asked my mom, "can I get my hair cut?" and she said, "Absolutely Allison." I know that only donating so many pony tails of my hair will go into making a wig. But if it will make one woman or girl have that feeling of messing with their new hair it is my pleasure to do this one small thing.

But I was still trying to find something I could do that was a little more hands on and I found it over Thanksgiving Break. I read an article in the Cincinnati Enquirer; it was an article about the Anderson Ferry Food Pantry. It said they were down on Christmas gifts for children. So I told my mom about the article and asked if I could contact Mark Miller and ask him if there was anything I could do to help. And she said, "Absolutely Allison." I then called him and he told me he was in need of gifts, he had over 300 children signed up for Christmas gifts. So I told him I would love to help.

I asked my teacher Mrs. Wenzel if I could please make an announcement asking school families to consider donating gifts and she said yes. So I made the announcement and printed a flyer and gifts started to come in. I didn't have much time to get the gifts together because he had a deadline of December 17. We had a few snow days and I was feeling like I didn't have enough so I contacted family and friends asking if they could donate gifts. And they said they would help. I know times are tough for families right now but the gifts didn't have to be real expensive they could be anything. On December 17 I collected all of the gifts and took them to Mr. Miller and was still feeling I wish I had more. I told him how I was feeling and he said if I only would have should up with one gift it would have helped one child make their Christmas special.

I guess this really what it is all about if you just help one person you are doing something great. And that's how I feel, if only everyone helps at least one person the world could be a better place. I know that there are wonderful people out there doing wonderful things, but I know that there is so much more that can be done. And when I go to high school I plan on contacting the Anderson Ferry Food Pantry next Thanksgiving and seeing if they need help again. If they do not I will look for another organization that may be in need of Christmas gifts for children, such as Bethany House. (Which I am also a volunteer at this organization as well).

In closing I would like to say that I plan on continuing to help out in any way I can with any organization that needs help. This makes me feel very full filled. After all that's why we are all here!