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When I was born my family was going through a tough time between my dad losing his job and our family struggling to sell our house. We moved in with my grandparents for what was supposed to be a brief period of time, but we ended up staying for about a year. During this time I became known, like Aubrey, as the child who made everyone smile, and I still try to do that today. During my grade school career I have always tried to reach out and serve. I've joined different clubs, volunteered at various organizations, and have never tried to pass up an opportunity to give back.

After trying almost everything, my grandma passed away from cancer when I was nine years old. As I learned from my favorite Disney movie, "The past can hurt, but the way I see it you can either run from it or learn from it." My tenth birthday party was quickly approaching, so instead of asking for unneeded presents I asked everyone to bring money to donate to Hospice of Cincinnati. Later in August I was able to bring \$200 to the Hospice center where my grandma died. About two years later I decided to donate ten inches of my hair to Locks of Love. It was a great experience and really made me feel good to help someone just like my grandma. When my grandma died I had my whole family to talk to whenever I needed. I believe that being able to talk was what really kept my spirits up. For that reason I am always there for my friends whenever they need it.

It has been very important to me that through my example I work to have a positive influence on others, especially those younger than me. Through babysitting I discovered that I love to work with little kids. I found that a great way to get involved with them was through tutoring. I have tutored kindergarteners for two years now and still feel so happy when I walk in and meet their beaming faces. There is also a club I was nominated to join, at school, called The Character Team. The Character Team sets an example for the student body and comes up with ways to teach them how to behave in the bathrooms, hallways, and many other places. Most of all Character Team is about stepping outside of your comfort zone and taking on true leadership roles. Being in eighth grade I have really been able to choose how I want to lead the younger students. I silently decided at the beginning of the year to reach out to the seventh grade and show them that eighth graders aren't any better than them. I think seventh grade really gets a bad rap from typical eighth grade classes about being "uncool" or "weird," but in reality it was just one year ago that we were in their place. I've done multiple things to build a bridge between seventh and eighth grade. At the beginning of the year I was disappointed to find out that I didn't make basketball team that was made up of only eighth grade girls. Rather, I was placed on a team of that was made up of a

mixture of seventh and eighth graders. At first this seemed like it was going to be awful. I decided to push myself even further and truly connect with the seventh graders. When the basketball season came to an end I had made tons of new friends and really enjoyed myself, but I knew that my mission couldn't stop there. Just recently I helped the seventh grade with their science fair projects. I also set into motion a plan to get a group of eighth graders together to go to their Confirmation ceremony in February. I'm sure I will find many other ways to connect to with the seventh graders, but my biggest hope is that they will continue to do the same next year when they are "big" eighth graders. Being in eighth grade has made me realize that I can do a lot to influence and inspire the younger students.

I love being able to see the faces of the people I help, but not knowing who it is brings an even bigger smile to my face. At Mathew 25 Ministries I bagged up goods for homeless people. The bags included soap, bandages, shampoo, and many more necessities that we take for granted. I also plan to go back to Mathew 25 in the next couple weeks. Another organization I love volunteering at is Kids Against Hunger where I put together meals for kids in third world countries. At school we put together bags for foster kids through an organization called Warm Welcomes. During Christmas I also bought clothes and other presents for a girl whose parents weren't able to give her a Christmas for one reason or another. I never got to see how these people reacted but I still feel good about doing it.

I believe that smiling is contagious, and for that reason I am always looking to spread joy to everyone I see. Although Aubrey is not with us in body she has affected so many people through her spirit. I know she has changed many lives, and I would be honored to represent her legacy as a scholarship recipient.