

## **Alivia Hyland - Saint Gabriel Consolidated School - Saint Ursula Academy**

“I believe that every human mind feels pleasure in doing good to one another”

-Thomas Jefferson

When we were in seventh grade, my sister and I went to work with my mom at a nursing home. Honestly, I thought it was going to be boring and a waste of time. When we got there, my mom pulled out a bag of nail polish and told us that we were going to paint some of the ladies' nails in the activity room. Really, I just wanted to go home and not do it at all. Later that day, I realized how much fun I had painting these ladies' nails and just talking with them. My sister and I decided to create a service organization to continue the nail painting visits called Colors of Love. With the idea stuck in our minds, we went straight to making a poster to bring to our seventh grade class.

That week, we made the second date to go to the nursing home and we hung up the poster in the 8th, 7th, and 6th grade classrooms. On the Saturday of that week, we had ten people come with us to paint and talk to the senior citizens. We had so much fun that day and everyone just loved the feeling of making these ladies smile big. One of the girls who went with us said that she loved how she made the elderly smile and felt that she did something nice that day. It is now nine months later after creating this organization in 7th grade, and we are still continuing this service.

After doing Colors of Love, I found the same joy in other service opportunities. During the summer, I found myself in love with coaching kids at my swim team. I also attended a field trip with my class to Matthew 25 Ministries. There, we sorted and folded clothes for those who needed it. My family and I also enjoyed our time at the Ronald McDonald House, where we cooked and served food for some of the families staying there while their loved one is either in surgery or is sick. Consistently, I babysit for three families and serve at St. John's Church in West Chester. This year, I have joined a club to make baby hats for children born at hospitals and also joined a rosary club to make rosaries to send off to missionaries. Every Christmas, my family and I also participate in a food and clothes drive, and a service called the Christmas Shoebox (where we fill up a shoebox and send it to Africa for kids who need it). Just recently, I went to Children's Hospital and I made blankets and stories for little children who are in the hospital long term.

The opportunities that I have had helped me realize I was so lucky to have a happy and healthy life and to never take that for granted. Service has become a large part of my life and I am grateful that I am able to serve others. As a bonus it fills me with such joy. I hope that my actions will inspire others to join some part of service to make people smile that need it the most. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to earn a scholarship for high school.