

Nick Boerger - Holy Cross Elementary - Holy Cross High School

“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don’t wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.” (Barack Obama)

It all started in first grade when I made bracelets out of leather with red, white, and blue beads and sold them at the Indian Hut, which is a spirit shop on the Holy Cross Elementary and High School campus, to raise funds for Haiti after the 2009 earthquake. I had heard stories about the terrible things Haitians were dealing with and wanted to help. I made the bracelets in the colors of the Haitian flag. I raised seventy-six dollars that went to Catholic Charities. Seventy-six dollars may not seem like a lot of money, but for a six year old and for the desperate people in Haiti, anything helped.

I think I was about nine and in the third grade when I volunteered to participate in a research study at Shriners Hospitals for Children involving an overnight stay in the hospital. I had to keep a log for about a week before the study and then spend the night being hooked to a machine that recorded my sleep activity. They needed healthy kids to participate. The ultimate goal was to help kids who had burn injuries, and I wanted to help, so I did.

Being of service is something that my family has done for a long time. Volunteering is sort of a tradition for us. Most of the time when I volunteer, I volunteer with family or friends. When I volunteer and get the chance to actually spend time with the people I’m helping, it not only brings joy to them but also to me. I often feel like helping others is helping yourself. If you can put yourself in the shoes of the people you are helping, you may have a different view of life and may realize just how lucky you are. I have to admit that I’m not always excited about volunteering, but I always leave feeling happy.

I’ve volunteered at Matthew 25 Ministries two to three times a year since first grade. It’s one of my favorite places to volunteer. I’ve gone there with family, friends, my church youth group, and even on a class field trip. They say that if you volunteer at Matthew 25 Ministries for one hour, you can help a whole village. I feel like the people who have it great in life should be giving service and volunteering to help people who aren’t having it so good.

In my school and church community I am a server. I serve school masses, weekend masses, and I’ve served for funerals. My church youth group does a different service project each month. I take out the trash for an elderly neighbor and a neighbor with a baby. That doesn’t seem like a lot, but for them it is. Also, little things can go a long way.

I want to pass down this tradition of service. I think that I will continue to volunteer throughout my life. One day when I’m grown and have a family, I’ll probably teach my kids to volunteer, too.

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Aubrey Rose Hollenkamp was a little girl who showed courage and strength. She fought many challenges like three open-heart surgeries and tricuspid valve replacement. If Aubrey Rose Hollenkamp can defy what the doctors said and survive three open heart surgeries, I think we can all volunteer every once in a while.