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How I have made a difference in the lives of people around me

I feel I have made a difference in the people around me in many ways. I think it started with my Grandma and Grandpa. My Grandma had Parkinson's and my Grandpa had a stroke when I was very little. During these years in our family's life I saw my parents and my brother help my Grandpa and Grandma in many ways. I remember my family driving them places, cleaning the house, going to the grocery or mowing the lawn and taking care of the yard. Since I was little I helped out in small ways by pulling weeds, dusting or running to get my Grandma something or just being with them. One way I remember was I would sit and draw them pictures. It always made them smile and they would hang them up in the kitchen. Later, when my Grandpa passed away, my Grandma had to go to Bayley place. We would visit her there and my brother and I would always want to take her to see the birds or outside to the play area so she could watch us run around. It made her happy. As Parkinson's took over my Grandma she needed help doing everyday tasks, even eating. My brother and I would help my Grandma play Bingo or do crafts at Bayley and that led to us to also helping the other residents there as well. I remember the look on their faces of appreciation and the smiles on their faces made us feel good inside.

I think this really made me a sensitive kid to others and I always want to help others in need when the opportunity presents itself. Like when kids are cramming into one table at lunch and someone gets left out, a lot of times I will get up and move to the other table to be with them so they have someone to talk to. I just want them to know someone cares. I have been a server at St. Jude since the 5th grade. Serving mass makes me feel like I am doing something to give back to my community and it is a great way to be a role model for the younger kids at school. I remember when my Pony football team went to Bayley to help the residents play Bingo. We had the best time together doing this so a smaller group of us then volunteered through St. Jude to prepare meals for the Tender Mercy organization. Tender Mercy is an organization that provides housing for homeless people and helps them get back on their feet. With the help of our moms we would plan a meal to prepare for the resident's there and then go downtown to the resident's hall to serve the meal. When we get there each of us had our own responsibilities to prepare the place for dinner. The residents were always so appreciative and thanked us for the meal we prepared. We always tried to interact with them as much as we could by saying Hello, telling them what we prepared, or just telling them to have a good day as they left the dining hall.

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Over the past two years with another group of friends at St. Jude I volunteered at City Gospel Mission. City Gospel Mission also helps homeless/drug/alcohol addicted people or whatever circumstance with shelter and assistance to get their lives back on track. With this program St. Jude buys the food and we cook and serve breakfast for the residents at 6:00 a.m. on certain Saturday mornings throughout the year. As we serve the food we try to interact with the residents to let them feel that we care and are interested in them. The people are very thankful and comment on what a good job we are doing. It is such a good feeling helping others. This one thing that I can do brings a smile to someone else who has less than me and lets them know there are people that care. I knew there were people in the world that didn't have all that I have, but by volunteering for both of these places I see that there are so many people that are going through hard times in our city. I want to continue helping others whether it is the small things I can do at school or through community service.

This is why I also ran for student council. The past two years I have been voted by my peers to be the voice of my class as Student Council Home Room Representative. I am not a popular kid and didn't think I had a chance, but I did it anyway. My motto was vote for someone who cares about you. You matter. I couldn't believe it, but I actually got a spot on student council. It was a great feeling that someone actually wanted me to represent them. I want to try and be that voice for the kids that don't have one. On student council we work to help make student events at school successful and bring class ideas and suggestions to our meetings. Last year we incorporated themed out of uniform days for a dollar and donated the money to different charities within our community. We also did candy grams at Christmas and donated that money to a charity. I believe kindness and helping others is the most important thing we can do. It's not hard to say a simple, "Thank You". It can really change the outlook of someone else's day. Just being polite can make the atmosphere around you more positive. I received our school Judite Kind and Christ like award last year for exemplifying core values in how I help others within our school on a daily basis. These selfless acts are part of who I want to be and I want to continue helping others and the Community through the many service activities available to me when I attend Elder High School.

Thank you so much for considering me for the Aubrey Rose Foundation Scholarship.