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I respectfully submit my application and essay for the Aubrey Rose Foundation Scholarship. Over the past three years, I have been involved in several volunteer experiences, trying to be a positive leader in our community. I have spent much of my free time on weekends and after school in a variety of activities providing service to the community. I enjoy my time helping others and hope to have a positive impact on those around me.

Once a month, I teach elementary students how to play chess, after school at a local grade school. I work closely with a parent volunteer to teach the 1st-3rd graders how to play and strategize their moves. Additionally, I have participated as a volunteer at several fundraising events, including the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Walk for Kids 5K Walk/Run at Paul Brown Stadium, the Special Olympics of Hamilton County 5K Walk/Run at Sawyer Point, and The Point ARC of Northern Kentucky as a setup volunteer for their annual Joy to the World fundraiser. However, my most rewarding experience came at the opportunity to help a very close family friend with their cause.

Two years ago, a very good friend of our family was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. At the time, Alex was a 15-year-old high school sophomore who has been a family friend for as long as I can remember. We vacation with Alex's family every summer, so he and I have grown to be very good friends over the years. The news that he was suffering from cancer hit our family hard. After several rounds of chemotherapy, Alex is now in remission and is doing very well, graduating from high school this upcoming Spring. Watching him fight his cancer has taught me numerous lessons about helping those in need. It has also fueled my desire to find a cure for this horrible disease.

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This past Christmas season, I decided to do something to help those who suffer from pediatric cancer when I learned of Alex's family's efforts through a partnership with Macy's and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. For every letter that was written to Santa and dropped off at Macy's, or sent online at macys.com/believe, Macy's donated \$1 to Make-A-Wish! Make-A-Wish is on a mission to grant the wish of every eligible child, because kids need a wish to give them strength and to help them heal. With the support of Macy's and its customers, Make-A-Wish can reach more kids and transform their lives.

I took it upon myself to start a letter writing campaign at Blessed Sacrament and some other local schools to help Alex's family raise donations and awareness. This past Christmas, the family collected over 1,400 letters to Santa, with over 400 of those letters coming from our efforts at Blessed Sacrament, Beechwood Elementary, and Villa Madonna Academy. Giving back has been the perfect way to embrace the spirit of generosity, especially through the holiday season. My Catholic faith has enabled me to make decisions on my own that I know help the community. I am inspired and know that Jesus will be there when I need Him to guide me to do what is right. Having been a part of all these volunteer activities has also taught me the importance of family.