

Annie Arengo - All Saints School - Mount Notre Dame High School

I love to bring smiles to people. By giving a book to someone, helping a teacher, and spreading kindness, there are many ways in which I make an impact in the lives of others.

At my school, All Saints, I participate in our spirit and service committee, Sham-4-U. Over the past few years, I have helped lead and serve my school community by creating school wide activities including organizing cereal box donations for a local food pantry, created Kindness Chains, organizing door decorating contests, pumpkin carving contests and giving of my time to assist teachers and students in many other ways. Being on this committee has inspired me to be a leader and help others. Being a part of this committee has helped me spread joy to my school and local community. While I have made a positive impact through Sham-4-U, my proudest accomplishment is learning about the life and writings of author, Virginia Hamilton, and spreading literacy in Cincinnati.

A passion of mine is reading. I love to read as much as I can every day. I love to read about others who inspire me and learn about people. When I was in 2nd grade, I learned about the life of Virginia Hamilton, her books and inspiring poetry. I wrote an essay about her life as an African American writer and how words can make a difference. In 4th grade, I continued to learn about her writing and her life. Her writing brought light to myself and others, and \ inspired me to continue to read and share about her life. That year, I met an author, Julie Rubini, at Books by The Banks; she wrote a biography about Virginia Hamilton. Her book inspired me to nominate Virginia Hamilton as a 'Great Ohioan.' A couple of months later, I found out that she was awarded this prestigious award. I was invited, along with my class, to the Ohio Statehouse to meet with Ohio representatives, Julie Rubini and Virginia Hamilton's son, Jamie Adoff, for the official acceptance. It was a privilege to nominate her, as it was a much-deserved honor for her and a way for others to recognize her work.

This experience inspired me to promote and bring literacy to others. I have held many book drives to collect books for the Literacy Network of Cincinnati. Bringing books to kids, schools and adults who are learning to read or who may not have access has allowed me to spread the joy of reading and make a difference in education and our community. Books can teach about history, bring people together, and make an impact. As Virginia Hamilton said, "For the writer, there is nothing quite like having someone say that he or she understands, that you have reached them and affected them with what you have written."

To read more about the nomination of Virginia Hamilton, you can read this blogpost:

https://www.julierubini.com/journal/full-circle/?fbclid=IwAR1Mu7ciRJQWRItx1I-3UwNKIdZgwtFZ7fL_jk32006UzGVawv3s81GBcIQ