

## **Theresa Dennemann–Summit Country Day School–Summit Country Day School**

I am extremely thankful for the opportunity to be able to go to a Catholic school that teaches me that I can have a positive impact on those around me. I go to Summit Country Day School, which is an extremely good school, and I know that it is a sacrifice for my parents to send me there. Because of this I have learned not to take my education for granted and to make the most of my experience in order to share what I gain with others. One of the great things about going to Summit Country Day is that the school focuses on the whole person. While academics are important, Summit focuses on Five Pillars: academic, athletic, spiritual, social, and artistic. Each pillar is important to develop and offers students ways that we can contribute in a positive manner.

Through the academic pillar, I am given an amazing academic foundation and I have learned to take the knowledge I have gained to help others. One example of this is in seventh grade our capstone project was based on learning about Non-Profit Organizations and then, through Magnified Giving, donating \$1,000 to a NPO that our class decided upon. The Non-Profit Organization my class decided to donate the money to was 1N5, which is an organization that helps to educate people about mental health issues. Through this experience, I learned ways that I can continue to use my time, talent and treasure to help others. One such way I use my academic talent and time is that I do video calls to a ten-year-old girl in China every other week to help her with her English proficiency. She was born in the United States, so she has a base understanding of the language, but her parents want to make sure that she does not forget what she has already learned. I use what I learn in Chinese and English classes during these calls.

Another way I have made a positive impact on my community, through the athletic pillar, is in cross country and Irish dance. Through cross country I made a positive impact on the team by never leaving the finish line until every member of our team crossed. At the beginning of the season, I ran alone most meets and I did not think much about it. It was when I started running with a teammate during the races, I learned to appreciate the group aspect of running as we encouraged each other. When I realized the positive impact this encouragement had on both of us, I started making sure that I was there when everyone after me crossed the finish line so I could cheer them on. In Irish dance, I make a positive impact by performing throughout the community. On Saint Patrick's Day my dance school performs for many places, such as work offices, the airport, restaurants, schools, and nursing homes. My favorite place to perform is at nursing homes because after dancing we get to talk with the residents, and they always talk to us about how much they enjoyed the performance and how happy they are that we came. I even made videos of myself dancing to share with nursing home residents during Covid when we were not allowed to visit in person.

Through the spiritual pillar I have made an impact by becoming a Eucharistic Minister. There were 38 people in my grade eligible to become a Eucharistic minister and only eight decided to become one. Covid made people forget the importance of

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participating during mass because we could not participate fully due to the spread of sickness. When I got the opportunity to be able to become a distributor of communion I signed up because by distributing communion I get to fully participate in mass. This not only impacts the community by sharing the responsibilities of Mass duties, but I also act as a role model for the younger students.

I make a positive impact socially as well. I participate in Service Club, a club focusing on service projects that happens during lunch. While I have been a part of Service Club, we have led school-wide annual projects such as The Giving Tree, Coat Drive, and Thanksgiving Food Drives. Last year we were able to propose our own project and apply for a grant. With the money we received, we held a book drive and put together bags with reading-related items, which we donated to the Queen City Book Bank. These bags were to encourage young readers to get excited about reading.

Being social is an important part of who we are as a community. Positive social interactions can be difficult for many in middle school. I observe classmates being unkind or gossiping about others. I avoid these interactions and even participated in The Youth Leadership Day where I was taught to be an upstander. Another example of having positive social impact is I video call my grandpa, who lives in a nursing home, very frequently. When my family calls him, we talk about what has happened to us recently so that he does not feel left out. The calls always make him happy because when we do not call him, or if he has no visitors then he gets lonely and does not get to interact with people other than his nurses.

The last pillar is Artistic. I make a positive impact in this pillar through polymer clay art, playing the flute, dance and sewing. I make a positive impact through my polymer clay YouTube channel, Clay Time with T. I post tutorials on how to make things with polymer clay, which makes an impact on the community because it teaches people how to use clay. When I first started using clay, I used a lot of videos for inspiration and help with techniques so I made a channel so that I could hopefully help people the same way videos helped me. I have also made an impact on the Bobby B. Fairfax school, a school run by Hamilton County DD services. I danced for them on Saint Patrick's Day and during our performance we got to talk with the students, and we let them join in on some of our dances. I also made a video along with some other band members of us playing our instruments and then we sent the video to Bobby B Fairfax. Another way I have positively impacted through art is by sewing. I suggested that my family should do something to raise money and then donate it. We decided on sewing corn bags, which are handmade bags that you can heat up or put in the freezer. We sold the bags and then we donated the money we made to the Aubrey Rose Foundation.

I will continue working to make a positive impact on my community because I have learned that I have been given much so I should give much.