

Aubrey Rose Hollenkamp Foundation Scholarship Essay

Ally Zeigler

My name is Ally Zeigler and I am currently going to St. Clement School. At first I didn't know who Aubrey Rose Hollenkamp was until one of my friends (who is now a senior in high school) won a scholarship. I read about Aubrey and was so sad to hear about a little girl having to go through so much pain and suffering. I was happy to hear that she was a fighter and always smiled even through the bad times. I can't imagine how hard it must be living in the hospital for four months. When I read the story about Aubrey I cried to hear she died so suddenly. I know it must be hard for Aubrey's family and the people she touched in her short lifetime.

I am an honors student and I am the eighth grade representative on student council. I am also a Eucharistic minister in church, and I play volleyball and I take jazz classes. I work at our church festival, help out in the cafeteria, and sometimes do afternoon announcements. I took a Babysitter's Training and First Aid class for a week at McAuley High School last summer. I babysit for free each month for our school's Teacher Parent Club. Some parents would like to come to the monthly meeting but can't because they have small children at home. This year, a few other girls and I have volunteered to babysit so that parents can attend the meeting.

I don't have to go far to find people in need to give a hand or share a smile with. I live with my mom, brother, sister and grandma. Three of these people have special needs. My grandma is 78 years old, walks with a cane, is hard-of-hearing, and has a heart problem. When she needs something, I do my best to help. My brother and sister each have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) at school because they have disabilities.

My brother, Daniel, is on the autism spectrum and has a hard time talking. I feel bad because I don't ever think he will have a "normal" life. I help him with homework, getting food, and other activities. I watch over him by making sure he gets home okay when we walk home from school. I watch for kids who make fun of him and tell them to stop. My brother is eight years old, the oldest in his class, and he is very smart. I am always proud and happy to see him smile and having fun. I remember the day my mom told me we were going to have a baby brother. I screamed and yelled that I was going to move away because I didn't want a brother. I regret ever saying that because I love my brother. I love him just the way he is.

My sister, Kelly, is eleven and has a speaking and reading disorder. Mom says she has been "diagnosed with a specific learning disability." She has a hard time reading and speaking clearly, but she is a really hard worker. I help her with her homework and practice her volleyball skills with her. Even though she is a little different we always have fun. Again, I love seeing her smile. When I see Daniel and Kelly happy it makes me happy. When I was in third grade I wrote a story about my sister and it was about how she snores but it helps me know she is always there. Hearing her snore makes me feel safe, even if I can't sleep!

My brother and sister are so funny. When my brother plays video games he yells and screams, “Yeah!” and “Wahoo!” He also loves cars, racing, and FedEx. I love to see him happy while racing. Kelly likes playing on the computer and she always teaches me new stuff every time. I love hanging with Kelly and Daniel. Whenever Kelly goes to a sleepover or goes over a friend’s house I get so bored and miss her. Once my brother went to my dad’s house and Kelly went to a friend’s house. I was so lonely and sad. I need my brother and sister otherwise I would be miserable. I love them and yes we can argue sometimes but that is normal.

It’s funny how you would think I affect *their* lives mainly, but actually they affect mine. They have taught me that people may be different but they are valuable and have a lot to teach others. Kind of like Aubrey Rose. They were born with more struggles than most, but their positive attitude carries them through.

I will always love them and hope they live happy lives. I know I make a difference and I try to be a positive influence. I know (or hope) their lives won’t end like Aubrey’s but I know that they live hard lives and yet they live it day by day with a smile on their faces. The least I can do is smile back and let them know I’m there for them.