

DEREK HARPER
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST – HARRISON

My goal is to enter LaSalle High School as a freshman in fall of 2008. LaSalle High School works hard to help in the community and I think I will be a good asset to them.

My life began earlier than it should have, which created some challenges for me as a newborn. My mom is a type-1 diabetic, and the doctors said I would have to be born eight weeks early or I most likely would not survive.

At five weeks old, I was diagnosed with a condition called pyloric stenosis, because I was having trouble digesting food. Weighing about four pounds, I went through surgery and the doctor said I was the smallest patient he had ever operated on. I survived the operation and my mom there is no greater peace than having your baby come through something like that. She says I've been bringing joy to the family ever since.

I live with my mom and dad and my brother, Kyle, who is not only my older brother but also one of my best friends. We have always been really close, even though he is four years older than me. We have never really fought, like I see a lot of other siblings do, and he doesn't try to 'ditch' me when he gets home.

I think I impact people around me at school as well. I act as a 'big brother; to two second-grade boys and watch over them. This is my third year helping out with younger students. I help my classmates with school work and am very respectful to my teachers. I have been awarded with the Citizenship award every quarter for the last three years. I volunteer to do errands for teachers, such as updating a message board outside or having daily flag duty. I donate money to camps in need down in Brazil. I also helped raise money for hurricane Katrina victims. All of my help has always given me closer relationships with my teachers.

I am Senior Patrol Leader for Boy Scout Troop 408 and am expected to lead the rest of my troop. I am one of the youngest Senior Patrol Leaders in my Troop's history and was elected to hold this position. I am a Life Scout, working on Eagle rank, and I have helped out with almost every fundraiser and charity work since joining the troop. Activities that my troop does are things such as site cleanups at two different community locations, and we have raised money for the Shriners, a charity organization who are known for helping people who were victims to a fire. I find it very rewarding to be raising money for a charity and hearing people tell you "Keep up the good work" and "Great Job!"

I would be honored to be chosen to carry on the legacy left by little Aubrey Rose. I hope to continue being a hard-working student and take part in LaSalle's community services.