

STEPHEN LANGE

ST. WILLIAMS

I have been involved in many different activities at school and in my parish such as student council, choir, and serving. I feel that the things I do in my life have made an impact on other people's lives.

I have been on the student council board twice, first publicity then a year later I became vice president. In student council we have organized many fund-raisers and field trips to put smiles on other's faces. One of the fund-raisers is the can food drive, where we collect cans as a school to give food to the poor and homeless on Thanksgiving. Last year we put three hundred dollars worth of food into 3 different family's homes for Christmas. Some field trips we organize are going to the nursing home every other month, and going Christmas caroling in December. It feels so good to see the happiness in the faces of those in nursing homes when you visit and smiles on faces when you sing.

For our church I sing in the choir and serve masses. I know how much that means to my parish and the joy music adds to the masses. I make an effort to step up when I notice that someone didn't show up to serve when they should have. I have been told I am a reliable person and that Father appreciates me filling in. I have also been an RCIA sponsor where you help a child become Catholic. This is a long commitment but it made me feel good about myself because I got to help someone learn more about God.

I have been involved with the celiac walk as well. My younger sister has Celiac Disease and we help raise money for research. I try to make her happy by making her feel like she is not different than other kids. She cannot eat what we do and sometimes she gets upset with that. Sometimes I will eat her food just to see her smile. I went to her celiac conference to learn more about her disease and to help take care of her better.

One thing I did when my grandpa became ill with cancer was remembered all the times he had made me or my friends laugh. I started to look up to him because of how he made everyone feel around him. Not only could he make you laugh, but also he was always in a good mood. Even when he was sick he took time to coach me. He was always making others happy. So when he was away in Texas for cancer treatments, it was my

turn to make him smile. We set up my computer with a camera so he could see everyone he missed.

One of my favorite things about eighth grade is having little first grade buddies. It is so fun when we go to see them. Their faces fill with smiles and joy for little things like a bag of candy, or just doing arts and crafts with them. It's so fun having your buddy walk by you in the hall and say, "hi buddy" because they don't know your real name.

I suffer from chronic migraines and have eosinophilic esophagitis. I have been going to Children's hospital since first grade and take many different medications. Being up at Children's makes you realize that you're not the only one suffering from illness and that there are many others who are sicker. You meet new kids and get to share stories with them. This helps pass the time. Through my illnesses and my allergies I still try my best to help others. My mom tells me that just one smile at a stranger, or a friendly hello could make someone's day. That is what I try hard to do everyday, to make a difference in other's lives.