

## Kenya Howard-Mercy Montessori-Mercy McAuley High School

One major way I have affected people around my life is community service from all over Ohio. I've volunteered at my local church, animal shelters, and through my school. At my local church, I have performed in a production called *Awaited: The Christmas Story* that tells the story of the birth of Jesus. I performed over 20 shows over three years, providing joy to families across the region. I have also co-lead a Pre-k classroom in Kids Club at my church, sharing the stories in the bible. That included leading small group lessons, taking care of the children and assisting with age appropriate craft projects.

Every November, my family volunteers for the Thanksgiving Food Drive; where we buy Thanksgiving food for the less fortunate communities and give it to them for free. During Christmas time, I participate in Angel Tree and purchase Christmas gifts for parents who are not able to purchase gifts for their children. At school, during Christmas time I also make donations for children in the orphanage and serve as an elf during Mercy's Breakfast with Santa, helping young children shop for gifts and sing carols as guests arrive.

At the SPCA animal shelter, I played with animals to help them get use to human contact until they are eventually adopted. I also help animals that were returned; I played with them to make sure that they are still comfortable with human contact.

My school does a lot of volunteer work. I was a Recycling Champion for two years. As a Recycling Champion I worked to help my school to recycle waste so we would have very little trash. I helped my school collect plastic bottle caps, so we could send them to a company to melt them into a bench, this bench is currently sitting in the front of the school right now as well as other areas on school grounds. I also volunteered at Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, where I restocked and packed groceries for the less fortunate.

In Sixth grade, my teacher Lower Elementary asked me to tutor a 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade student for math. I was surprised, I was struggling in math in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade too, and I was both honored and surprised by this request. Part of me felt nervous about the job I was supposed to do. What if I taught her the wrong thing? What if I couldn't teach her at all? What if I wasn't a good teacher? But all of my worry faded away when I actually started tutoring. The work was familiar and I gave the child tips to help. I think we made great progress. Her parents even sometimes gave an Amazon or Visa gift card. Although the tutoring sessions only lasted a couple of months, the child and I made great progress and we both got something out of it. I gained new confidence in myself and my abilities and she gained new math skills. These are a few examples of how I have affected people around my life. The best part is, along the way I have also received many gifts from others that have affected my life in return.