

## **Sarah Turner–Annunciation Catholic School–Saint Ursula Academy, page 1 of 2**

I have affected many people in my life at Annunciation Catholic School and at home. My parents have raised me to think about others and how best to care for them. I have been an active volunteer with my mom at The St. George Interfaith Food Pantry since I was in the third grade. I have worked directly with the food pantry's patrons on Saturday mornings and have developed many special bonds with them. I am the person that patrons interact with at the food counter and I assist them in making choices for their monthly food supply. I also bag their groceries for them. I help patrons in choosing personal care items such as bars of soap or toothpaste and I walk with them to the door when they are done. I especially look forward to seeing two older patrons who are brother and sister - Brenda and Carl. They are always grateful and show their appreciation by thanking me and sharing stories or jokes. The kindness they show me encourages me to continue to spread kindness to others at school and at home. I look forward to volunteering at the food pantry because of the kind patrons like Brenda and Carl. After volunteering, my mom and I discuss how we can continue to fulfill the needs of the food pantry patrons.

My school has ongoing food drives and fundraising for the food pantry. Because of my close involvement with the pantry, I can share which items are needed from month to month, like diapers and instant coffee. The students and teachers at my school always fill up boxes of food and other items needed for the pantry. I have been able to help the food pantry by taking part in the "Fill Up the Van" food drive and I have also helped make the list of items needed. My school has participated in this event for several years now.

Every year at Christmas time, my parish sponsors a gift giving project for patrons of the food pantry. Parishioners pick a tag off a Christmas tree that has an age range and gender listed for a gift idea. Before the gift giving event, donated gifts are sent to the pantry where they are sorted into genders and age ranges by several volunteers. On the day of the gift hand out event, I help select presents for individuals and families. I enjoy handing the gifts over to the patrons and seeing their joyful reactions. I have volunteered at these events for many years and have encouraged my school community to join me in volunteering. Many of my fellow students and teachers have helped volunteer at these events and continue to do so.

At home I have conversations with my family about important issues such as pollution and recycling. I make sure to use re-usable containers and bags along with recycling materials. When my family and I shop for groceries we try to use paper instead of plastic bags and buy products with minimal plastic packaging. Helping our environment is something that is very important to me. I learned about these practices at the Cincinnati Zoo's camps and nature day camps.

I try to bring these learned practices with me to school every day and help my peers learn how they can make a difference too. At the beginning of last year, my student council and I started a new project. We wanted to raise money for a school bench. What better way to do it than to make it out of recycled bottle caps? We sent out flyers to the school

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community and made posters to promote our new project. If we are able to collect the right amount of bottle caps, we will have them melted down and turned into a bench.

Another project of the student council includes helping to save aluminum tabs from soda and soup cans that are then given to The Ronald McDonald House as a donation. These tabs bring them about forty cents per pound. I save tabs all long year to help this cause. I have also volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House with friends from church to host an ice cream sundae party for the families of patients. I am eager to work there again soon.

Inside the classroom, I offer help to my classmates with homework or assignments and I have offered to tutor younger students during recess. I enjoy working with younger students because I know how hard it can be to not understand a lesson or assignment. During the high school application process, I encouraged my peers to stay positive about results as they waited for letters of acceptance. It was fun to hear about where friends would be going to high school.

I promote my grade school as much as I can. Over the years I have helped several families make their decision to come to my school after touring them at open houses. I often wear my school shirt out in public and always represent my school in a positive way. I am also looking forward to promoting Saint Ursula Academy.

Thank you for considering me for this scholarship. Thank you for this opportunity.