

Payton Hall

(931)217-5749

Northeast High School

Outreach

Outreach can mean a number of things to various people, however, we all seem to understand that in our hearts outreach consists of extending ourselves, our talents, and our resources in such manner to create a difference in someone's life.

My personal outreach revelation came to me in elementary school, not as a recipient of an active outreach program, but as a provider. My elementary school counselor, Debra Bucy, ignited my passion for giving in the first grade when she sent home a little red flyer. This flyer disclosed information about an opportunity to help other less fortunate children and their families in my own school by donating to the annual Christmas toy and food drive at St. Bethlehem Elementary School. Mrs. Busy challenged us to bring in canned goods and/or a wrapped toy marked as a gift for a boy or girl. She came around to each of our classrooms and explained to us that some of the children in our very own class may not have enough food for a Christmas dinner, sufficient gifts to open, or an ample amount of warm clothes to wear.

I specifically remember a little boy in my kindergarten class that always came to school in dirty clothes. My teacher actually brought him a new pair of clothes to wear and he walked around in his new outfit so proud. I realized that I wanted to make profuse amount of people feel like that kid in my class did. That year my mom and I went shopping for toys to donate; enough for one boy and one girl. Once we arrived back home with the gift my mom helped me wrap them and I cleaned out our food cabinets for extra cans we could bestow. Once at school we

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were allowed to carry the items to Mrs. Bucy's office where she personally thanked each child personally for their donations. I continued my contribution every year until I moved on to Burt Elementary School.

As I grew older I continued visiting St. Bethlehem, considering my mother worked there, and Mrs. Busy allowed me to help wrap all the gift for the drive. My mother later began to help her deliver the food and gifts. Every year the stories they would come back and tell of those who were truly in need and sincerely grateful for the items they received through the toy and food drive caused me to really understand how blessed and lucky I am. Fortuitous enough to lend my time, fortunate that this counselor gave me the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life by something as simple as wrapping a gift and giving my time.

Through this simple red flyer I discovered how much I genuinely enjoy helping others. I have gone on to volunteer in several ways: serving at the soup kitchen, collecting toiletries for the homeless, helping with the St. Bethlehem Elementary PTO, volunteering through girl scouts, conducting a food and supplies drive for a local puppy rescue shelter, volunteering in the library, and working with combat hunger. After each and every project I have realized that the ones who benefits the most is not the one who receives the proceeds, but the ones who are reaching out to help. Thank you Mrs. Debra Busy for reaching out with that little red flyer that has helped me become a better person in today's society. She has been an active counselor at St. Bethlehem for over twenty years and has helped over 100 families.

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Once I graduate from high school my goal is to come back to St. Bethlehem every year through college to continue helping Mrs. Busy assist all of those families in need. I am actually quite excited to actually be able to go on the delivery runs beginning next year! As Mrs. Busy looks forward to retirement in the near future I hope to continue learning from her so that I may carry on her work with this wonderful outreach that has made a world of difference in the lives of generations of families in our very own community.

Outreach

Outreach is the act of helping others even when it is not convenient for the one who takes action. If there is anyone who truly embodies this concept, it is Mrs. D, my neighbor. Despite her age, she does everything she can to help those in the neighborhood whether it is with monetary struggles, missing pets, or anything else that may be troubling someone. Whether she is setting up a neighborhood yard sale, collecting recyclables to keep the neighborhood's lights on, or spending hours looking for a lost dog, she always puts her heart into all of her actions. I have always admired her selflessness and how she puts others before herself without being reckless.

I have not been a stranger to the concept of outreach myself. For every villain with ill intentions, there is a hero making a difference with the powers of outreach. Even as a child, I had a close friend named Esther who always went out of her way to be kind to others. When I was being laughed at or ostracized from the group, she always supported me and gave the opportunity to experience true friendship. The way she would positively intervene in my life despite peer pressure inspired me. I began to see the world as a rose. Based upon how this rose was nourished, the Earth could gain a brighter color with an uplifting aroma, or it could wilt and wither, petal by petal, until it has lost all signs of life. If the world is given kindness, consideration, and outreach, the world will grow and thrive as a beautiful flower. Even the smallest act of kindness could alter the world's condition into one that is more positive.

A person with any career can make a difference. My career aspiration is to become an accountant. With my occupation I will be able to do more than just organize

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money. My skills can help others plan their finances and remain secure in their homes, able to provide for not only themselves but also their families, friends, and hopefully charities. With my own paycheck, I also intend to donate to local charity organizations. I also yearn to contribute my own time and efforts to causes as well. There is truly a myriad of possibilities when it comes to helping others, and I hope to devote my time to doing so whether it is within my own home or across the globe.