



Saint Francis Xavier Catholic School

612 E. Washington Medina, Ohio 44256

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Dear Parents of Saint Francis Xavier School Students,

We are honored you have chosen our school for your child's precious education and we appreciate your trust. Before we know it, your students will be "big kids" making the leap to high school. As you are considering where that will be, we wanted to provide you with a heartfelt essay written by an alumni of St. Francis Xavier School. She is the winner of the SFX PTC Character Scholarship for 2017 and our scholarship committee was very moved by the essay she submitted in answer to the question of how SFX School had helped develop her character. The PTC Scholarship Committee felt that she expressed some of the same feelings that the PTC parents have about their children's experience at SFX and why the school has felt like a family as well as a school to their children.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sharon Tahajod
Chairperson PTC Character Scholarship



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St. Francis Xavier School Parent Teacher Committee Character Scholarship Winning Essay 2017

My name is Shannon and in just a few weeks, I will graduate with honors from St. Vincent St. Mary High School in Akron, Ohio. Like most high school seniors, I am excited and scared. Unlike most seniors, I feel 100% sure of my next steps in life. After a brief summer break, I will enroll in Duquesne University in Pittsburgh to begin my degree in nursing, followed by a career in the United States Naval Nurse Corps.

I was raised in Medina and started school in first grade at St Francis Xavier. I want to share a couple of things that I learned at SFX. These are not lessons from a book, but lessons that I observed.

Mornings at SFX started at the front door of the school with a greeting, a smile and eye contact from the morning greeters. If something was wrong, your teacher knew it before you even made it to class and someone was there to make sure all was ok. At lunch, if you raised your hand, someone's mom would open your yogurt, and if you forgot your lunch, a teacher made you a PB&J. Parents made a nice homemade lunch on "Teacher Tuesday" so the teachers knew they were supported, and all students dressed in the same uniform so financial status did not separate peers. I saw that parents, veterans and grandparents were welcomed, invited to the school and honored with lunches and special programs. Concerts were full of supporters clapping for all the students and teachers came to CYO games to cheer. When a classmate had a death in their family, students and teachers filled the service and sat together so the grieving family could look over during the procession and see the support of friends there to share their grief. Every SFX funeral mass was a full house. When my mother was fighting breast cancer, my class day started with her name and a prayer from my schoolmates. Dinners were dropped off by moms and teachers and I had a line of people waiting to drive me to practice and make sure my family was ok. I knew I was going to be ok.

Most students in America learn basically the same lessons in grade school, but I learned more than math and reading.

I sit with people who are sitting alone. I smile and offer a warm greeting to people I do not know. I offer help. I do not judge my school peers by their clothes or their car. I make eye contact. I cook meals, buy flowers, say thank you, write notes of appreciation and I go to funerals to show my support. Those are the lessons I observed as a student at St. Francis Xavier.

Shannon

St. Francis Xavier School Class of 2013

St. Vincent St. Mary High School Class of 2017

SFX PTC Character Scholarship Winner 2017