

“How my Positive Outlook Benefits my Community”

715 words

A positive attitude is contagious. An optimistic outlook can improve your day, and possibly, someone else’s as well! They say that a smile is the best accessory a person can wear, and I wholly agree. A genuine grin, just like a good joke, can lift the clouds of depression and replace them with rays of sunshine. There are many different ways to express your positive outlook, whether you’re serving soup to the homeless, wrapping presents for a needy child, or helping build houses for families. All of these good deeds have one common thread, they are benefitting the community. Whether it’s one child being helped or a whole family, even the smallest gesture is a step. My small contribution to the community was joining the unified tennis team at my school. At first, I didn’t think I wanted to join. I had no clue how to play tennis, and wasn’t sure I would fit in. I decided to take a managing position and, soon afterward, realized what an awesome opportunity I almost missed out on.

The tennis team benefits my school community by giving students an opportunity to join up with special needs kids. During the school day, the special education children are separated from the rest of the student body. Even when given the chance, most students don’t interact with them anyway. This creates a barrier between the two groups. Combined sports like the tennis team were created to bring down those walls and show students that a person is a person, no matter how different they may seem. During the tennis season, we teach one another about the game, learning new techniques and building special bonds. While at a competition, one of the jubilant parents wanted to snap a team photo. We

wrapped our arms around one another, the 15 individuals becoming a sea of dark blue cotton. The heat intensified as our breathing became that of one person. Tears were shed and giggles were exchanged as we were waiting for the shutter to signal that the moment was captured forever. Our arms tightened as a light breeze danced over us, cooling our brows and making us want to hold in the heat of the day. A thousand and one memories reeled in our minds; glimpses of practices, bus rides, and competitions were seen, as if flipping through pages of a scrapbook. Our smiles stretched out across our faces, our eyes blinked one more time, just before the flash appeared, blinding us for a moment. Our arms released one another, and our smiles faded as we realized the sun was setting, the competition was over, and tennis season was officially coming to a close. The only proof we have of our time spent together is the friendships that were formed and the photographs that were taken.

My role on the tennis team has not only had an effect on the community, but has also changed me as a person. In school we don't really have opportunities to socialize with special education students, so this was a new experience for me. During my time on the tennis team, I learned firsthand what it was like for the special education students. I have now realized how truly blessed I am, to be born healthy and with no physical or mental disabilities.

Having a positive outlook is a personal choice. There are those of us who go through life with a smile on our faces and optimism in our hearts, but never think to share it. Some people out there feel that a smile is just a reflex of the facial muscles and that optimism is an illusion created by a hormone in the brain. Then, there are those select few who dedicate their whole lives to improving the community and the people in it. Personally, I don't know

if I fit into any of these categories. What I do know is that a positive outlook is something truly special, something that can change lives and expand minds to new thoughts and dreams. By joining the unified tennis team I made a difference in my school. My heart was touched by the new students that I met and that I am now proud to call my friends.