

# Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2017

Megan McCarthy  
Our Lady of Visitation

God has blessed every person with a different talent. I received the talent of patience and interest of learning new things from God. One of my mom's friends is an artist and does mission work. She taught me how to paint and invited me to do mission work with her organization art for all people. One way I share my talent is by volunteering at the Esther Marie Hadden women's shelter and paint with them every Wednesday.

The ladies there have all gone through very hard times and it is relaxing to them to be able to sit down and paint. I enjoy seeing their paintings and also talking to them. Often times I give my paintings to a woman who is either down or who had a bad day. The women get to listen to music and hear inspirational bible quotes. It fills me with joy every time I get to make someone's day by simply giving them a piece of artwork. It is something simple for me, but means the world to them.

The ladies also enjoy having a child at the shelter. A lot of the women have children of their own but don't get to see them very often. Sometimes your presence is all it takes to put a smile on someone's face. It must be hard for them not see their children often, but seeing another child might help them remember that God will take care of everything if you have faith and believe in him.

One of the first times I went to the shelter, I met a very special lady. She was on drugs before, but is not anymore. She is currently pregnant and due in April and is trying to stay healthy for the baby. When I first met her, she asked me to paint a fox for the baby's room once she gets her apartment. I was very happy that she wanted me to do something that had a lot meaning of to her. A couple weeks later when I saw the woman again, she wanted an elephant for the nursery. She immediately looked at me and asked me to paint another canvas for her. Once again I was overjoyed that she chose me to do the painting for her. Now every time I go to the shelter I like to sit and talk to her. She asks me how I am or how my day was. She is so grateful because these paintings are one of the only things she has for the baby's room and it means a lot to her.

I have gained a lot so far from going to the homeless shelter. I hope to continue my mission work there. I have learned so much about how people can change. The woman I go with always says that being homeless does not define you. She also says no one is invisible. I think these words mean a lot to the women there because I think it is easy for them to get wrapped up into thinking that no one cares about them. This experience has made me realize I have a very good life and some people have to really work for what they have.