



# Write to Educate

## Scholarship Contest Winner

**Nathan McCoy**  
**Mason High School**

**Essay Topic: Credit Unions were built on the principle of People Helping People. Why do you think this philosophy is important? How can you embody this principle in your community, on your college campus, or through volunteerism.**

Our world today needs to follow a little more of the “people helping people” mentality. Credit unions have followed this philosophy for years as they put their communities first. When you join a credit union, you become a member, a shareholder, an owner, a part of a community of people. This is just like becoming an active member in society where this same philosophy should be the foundation in which its members live. Much like a credit union, members in society should pay it forward.

I believe it is important to treat people the way I would want to be treated. Helping others is critical and inevitable in the way I live my life. I have learned to demonstrate this philosophy through a contagious smile, positive actions and friendly volunteer services.

According to my mother, I entered the world with a smile literally painted on my face. This may have been symbolic for me as I truly believe that a positive attitude is contagious, and it begins with a smile. Ever since I can remember, speaking and understanding the written word was a struggle. School was challenging for me; however, I stayed positive and kept that smile on my face. I enjoyed being around others and felt lucky that others were willing to help. I overcame many obstacles by learning coping strategies and displaying determination, which I did with gratitude for those that willingly assisted, supported and encouraged me. I am extremely thankful for the ‘people helping people’ philosophy as I was often the recipient of that gift!

Regardless of how challenging my school work seemed, I noticed peers experiencing challenges of their own. With hardships like divorce, cancer, anxiety and bullying, I could pay it forward to my school community. I learned to use my sense of humor and laughter to brighten the day. I prayed, provided encouragement, offered advice and worked hard to lend a helping hand whenever possible. I strongly believe being able to pass my smile onto others alleviated some of their pain. They needed to know that someone cared, and I was able to provide that escape, even if it was only a ten second giggle. During my years at Mason High School, four of my classmates lost their lives to cancer. I eagerly participated in various initiative projects to support these courageous individuals. I volunteered to play in the “Strike Out Cancer” softball game, attended fundraiser dinners, appeared in class photo motivators, purchased t-shirts/bracelets and took an active role in the “Compete for a Cause” event in hopes to put an end to childhood cancers.

Sports have always been my strength and through sports, I helped my community. I grew up assisting my uncle, the Varsity basketball coach, as team water boy and team manager. Eventually, I became part of the Varsity basketball program and took on the coaching role at youth basketball camps. It was great being able to give back and help young players with their basketball skills. This led to volunteering opportunities like refereeing for Upward Basketball and working the admission tables for the Jr. Pro basketball community. Last winter, I was hired to help coach a youth basketball program where I met a young boy that had a similar speech impairment and the same language disability that so many people throughout my life had helped me overcome. We quickly became buddies and connected on many different levels. Upon the program completion, his parents expressed gratitude and appreciation for all of my efforts and extra attention. Little did they know, I understood their son more than they realized.

“People helping people” is contagious. It truly takes a village to create something precious. As a valuable member in society, it is my duty to do my share and lend a hand whenever possible to someone in need. It is a philosophy worthy of recognition!

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