

## AVALON REGALBUTO SCHOLARSHIP FINALIST



### **AVALON REGALBUTO**

**is a senior at Orange High School and the oldest of six children, a responsibility she takes very seriously. In her free time she enjoys swimming, softball and golf. She has been accepted to several universities and hasn't decided where she will attend in the fall. She plans to continue on to medical school and become a dermatologist.**

A year ago, I witnessed one of the most troubling acts of hatred on my affluent high school's lacrosse field. At practice, a freshman male was ridiculed for having an old, different color jersey. He was called multiple names like "poor boy" or "penny Benny" and was pushed around the group, causing him to endlessly fall to the damp, muddy dirt. He couldn't afford the newest jerseys the lacrosse team purchased or any of the other equipment for the season; everything that he wore was borrowed.

Lacrosse, being a club sport at my school, is played by students who can afford new equipment, new clothes, and need not rely on the school to fund their desired sport. However, just one adrenalized, committed boy was insufficient of all three things. He was teased solely on his lack of finance but still, with the utmost passion, played his heart out on that field, avoiding his teammates' rants.

He was presumed unresponsive to the constant bullying, however I could tell he didn't feel equal; due to their constant rants and physical abuse, he felt less of a man, and more of a poor, helpless boy. However to me, he looked unique. Although my heart ached in mere sorrow for that boy, he stuck out to me like a dominant, red rose among thousands of simple, yellow dandelions. I was disturbed at how cruel a mass of boys could be to another who could not afford the newer gear. As I watched him sprint in drills, glide to the goal, and fall to the ground, I realized something borrowed is something worth aspiring for. Because of that borrowed equipment, he was able to play a sport he passionately enjoyed. He was not discriminated by the sport, but yet discriminated by his own teammates. That boy was my younger brother, and for our entire life in a six children home, we constantly lent each other clothes, toys, and equipment.

Because of him, I decided to create a voluntary organization where everything was purely borrowed. I am the founder of a charity called Christmas in July. It provides inopportune children with borrowed equipment, toys, and clothes, allowing them to create fond memories that will last forever. Moreover, Christmas is a time for giving, so when I decided to name my charity Christmas in July, it was for the mere reason of watching kids gleam with excitement to open presents, just like on Christmas morning. Also, this project educated me on the so-called unfairness of birth right or birth place. I've seen how resilient kids, like my brother, struggle with many hardships but their understanding of being happy is rather simple and more important. Today, I still work with these wonderful, joyful children and consistently donate multiple items to them. Inspired by my younger brother, I strive to help children who are discriminated against in affluent societies improve additional memories, interests, and passions by simply giving them something borrowed.

