

Leya Givvines is a senior currently attending “Our Lady of Good Counsel” high school in Olney, Maryland. She is currently in the International Baccalaureate Program, which requires taking college-level courses and earning college credit. In addition, she was one of a handful of girls selected for the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program. Leya was selected to be a member of the National Honor Society and the XBSS Leadership Institute. This institute is by “invitation only” for student leaders who participate in the work of service and stewardship



Figure 1 Love in Action

In addition, to Leya’s academic excellence, she has been involved in many school clubs and is currently leading four of them. The one common theme that exists in most of her selections of extracurricular school activities is her commitment to “serving others.” Leya feels truly blessed and enjoys opportunities where she can serve others that are less fortunate. As an example, this past summer, she was fortunate to attend the National UNICEF Conference held in Washington, D.C. that aimed to raise awareness and share ideas about children's rights around the world. During this conference, she was one of a group of students who met with a congressional budget committee to fight for continued UNICEF funding.

Leya has successfully completed a number of leadership conferences to include two 9-day conferences. One was the National Student Leadership Conference on Medicine and Health Care at the University of Berkeley and the National Youth Leadership Forum – Advanced Medicine and Health Care at the Johns Hopkins University. Additionally, she has been nominated for the Hugh O’Brien Leadership Award for her demonstrated leadership abilities and was excited to have been selected by school staff, along with a handful of other students, to visit Pope Francis during his Washington, DC visit.

From a personal, Leya has voluntarily participated in many outreach efforts to include mission trips to Haiti, rural areas of West Virginia with the Christian Appalachian and Kentucky and the inner city of NJ. She has also been serving the homeless monthly for the past four years and participated in many other church and community activities. She loves animals and currently has three dogs. She also loves to go kayaking and hunting with her father. She has volunteered her time to be a counselor at a summer Bible school and has been involved with a teen bible study group for the past four years.



Leya recently has joined the Laytonsville Fire Department as a volunteer and hopes to train to be an EMT.

Leya has also been active in school sports and has played volleyball and softball. She has been playing softball since her first year of high school and plays travel softball for other organizations.

Lastly and most importantly, Leya is spiritually grounded. One of her favorite bible verses in the Bible is Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Leya experienced one of the most difficult years in her life this past year. One of her best friends died unexpectedly, her favorite

aunt (also her godmother) passed after suffering from a deadly disease for two years and she watched her mother bravely fight two types of cancer. Leya is resilient and these experiences only made her stronger and more determined. She has no doubt she wants to attend medical school to become a doctor so she can make a positive difference in people's lives.





