



**Personal Progress**

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**Name:** Aimee J.

**Age:** 18

**Location:** Utah, USA

**Fun Facts:** Won state title for 3-D art in the national PTA Reflections program; elected junior class secretary; served as Laurel class president; received Young Womanhood Recognition; graduated from seminary; plays flute and ukulele; received a superior score for a flute solo in a state solo and ensemble competition; ran on the cross-country and track teams; ran in the Utah Valley Marathon.

# MORE than CLAY

**S**itting in the courtyard of her high school, Aimee J. noticed that something was missing. Unlike other high schools, hers didn't have a statue of the school's mascot. She thought this was something she could probably change, having sculpted since she was young. All she needed was funding for materials and casting, as well as the permission and support of her school.

So Aimee drew up a proposal and presented it to the school principal. It was eventually approved, and Aimee started work on a model of the school's mascot, a thunderbird. Her model was later cast in bronze to become a six-foot monument to her high school, dedicated to her senior class.

**How did you start sculpting?** My dad is a sculptor, so we would always have clay around the house. I would just mess around with it, making little knickknacks and pots.

**How did you feel while working on the sculpture?** Sculpting the thunderbird was one of my Personal Progress value projects. I did the

sculpting in May of my senior year, so I missed out on a lot of barbecues and parties. It was a service for all of my fellow seniors, and it took a lot of long hours being all alone in that sculpting room, but it was worth it.

**Is there a spiritual side to this process?** I've noticed that if I'm more in tune with the Spirit, the creativity

flows better. Sometimes I listen to Church music while sculpting, and it seems to help everything work out better. Whether it's in athletics or art or anything, having the Spirit in your life definitely uplifts you, helps you see things in a clearer light, and makes you feel better about what you're doing.

**What has sculpting taught you?**

The scriptures give an analogy that we are like a lump of clay and life is the refining process that molds us and shapes us into who we will eventually become in our perfected state. [See Isaiah 64:8.] I think about that a lot as I sculpt and about how we need to be humble and allow ourselves to be molded by what Heavenly Father wants. **NE**

—As told to Elyssa J. Kirkham