

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Arianna Alvarado

School: Alta Vista School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Liliana Gaxiola

Statement:

Arianna Alvarado deserves this award as all of these Six Pillars of Character are clearly a part of her character. Arianna is constantly showing responsibility as she is always doing what she is supposed to be doing. Arianna is ready as she comes in first thing in the morning, she is always in line by the time the bell rings, she is in class with her morning work ready on her desk. I nominate this student because she is a true representative of all of the character count pillars, there is not one pillar that she does not represent.

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Student Name: Anahi Morales

School: Ducor Union Elementary School, Ducor

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Maria Barajas

Statement:

Anahi is a very caring and respectful student. She is always eager to help her friends in a caring way.

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Student Name: Meghan Brooks

School: Exeter Union High School, Exeter

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Andrea Venegas

Statement:

Meghan Brooks isn't afraid to go against the grain to do what she thinks is right. This is rare in a high school student. She is a natural leader and students listen when Meghan talks. She is kind to everyone, regardless of popularity status or grade and anyone that speaks with Meghan, instantly feels like they've made a friend. I have been Meghan's teacher for all four years of her high school career, and I know that I can always count on her. When I have a project that needs special care or something that needs to be managed outside of classroom hours, I know I can count on Meghan. She not only gets the work done, but she does it with quality and pride.

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Student Name: Robert Bonney

School: Lincoln Elementary School, Exeter

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Savannah Dougherty

Statement:

Robert is an all-around exceptional student. It's hard for me to pick just one pillar of character that Robert best represents because he is a great example of all of them. I chose responsibility as the pillar which most exemplifies his behavior. His amazing work ethic and dedication to succeeding in school, and outside of the classroom. I can always count on Robert to be the first one to get started on an assigned task. He is a hard worker and strives to make sure he really masters the concept we are working on. I can always expect his name to be listed as a "super student" in the substitute teacher and library feedback. He has an amazing work ethic and is an amazing contribution to our class. He is always an active participant in group work, and I know that he will assist students that may struggle in understanding. Robert is an outstanding student and is the epitome of responsibility.

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Student Name: Clayton J. McBride

School: Rocky Hill Elementary School, Exeter

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Whitney Pollock

Statement:

I would like to nominate Clayton "CJ" McBride under the Pillar of Caring. He is an outstanding young man with a heart of gold. CJ loves people and has a way of brightening everyone's day. He will go out of his way to greet people or give them a much-needed high five on campus. CJ makes people feel special because he remembers names, faces, and even the names of people's pets. After meeting CJ one time, people remember him because of his positive energy and contagious smile. He is curious and kind to his classmates, and he always asks questions to his teachers to further understand a situation. CJ is unique, his zest for life extends outside of the classroom. I am thrilled to be your teacher and to watch you grow and impact the lives of so many. You are truly one of a kind and a role model for so many. You remind everyone of the importance of human connection. We are blessed to have you in our classroom, on our campus, and in our community.

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Student Name: Evan Botello

School: Deep Creek Academy, Farmersville

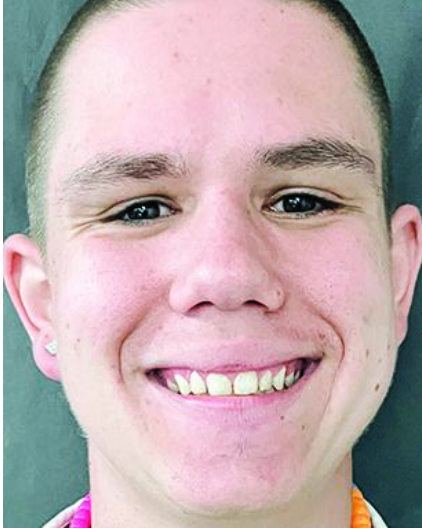
Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Charley Defevere

Statement:

Evan Botello works hard at getting his schoolwork completed even if that means working at home over the weekend. It was difficult deciding which of the six pillars was most appropriate for Evan, but he clearly exhibits the Pillar of Responsibility best. He always excels and goes the extra mile in all areas. We at Deep Creek Academy are proud to call him one of our students!

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Student Name: James Hedgecoth

School: Farmersville High School, Farmersville

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Justine Gomes

Statement:

James is always looking out for his fellow students as well as his teachers. He will help anyone without being asked or expecting anything in return. He has good manners and is respectful to our classroom rules. I can always count on James to be truthful and upfront in all situations. James is also very thankful to anyone who he knows and the people who care about him or help him in any way. James is truly a great young man and absolutely deserves to be recognized as he has not had an easy childhood and that just goes to show how impressive he really is.

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Student Name: Joseph Hernandez

School: Freedom Elementary School, Farmersville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Sebastian Santillan

Statement:

Joseph Hernandez is a student who strives to respect anyone he comes across. He is always on task when he is assigned any work. Joseph is no longer in my class; however, he comes to me for advice. Even when he has a struggle, he is still being responsible about his education. Some students at this point might want to give up, but Joseph is trying to find ways to do his work. He is always doing what he is supposed to be doing inside and outside the classroom. Last year when he had substitutes, Joseph was responsible enough to let the substitute know where things are located. He is always willing to help those in need. Last year when his classmates were struggling Joseph stepped up, even though his English Language was not fully developed, he was still there to help students.

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Student Name: Alia Orozco

School: George L. Snowden School, Farmersville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Karen Zeibak

Statement:

Alia demonstrated the trait of responsibility in many ways in our classroom last year, as a second grader. To begin with, she always had a happy positive attitude about all classroom assignments. Whatever type of assignments we were completing she always made sure she finished the work. On most days Alia spent time in the nurse's office, but she always took the responsibility to turn in all assignments and do her best work. Alia was always willing to help others. If someone was unable to log on to a computer or couldn't find a page, she was there to help. Alia ended last school year, with high academic marks. She met her learning goals in all subjects. Alia is the pillar of responsibility and proves that with determination and a positive attitude she can reach for the stars.

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Student Name: Helena Rios-Zuniga

School: Jefferson Elementary School, Lindsay

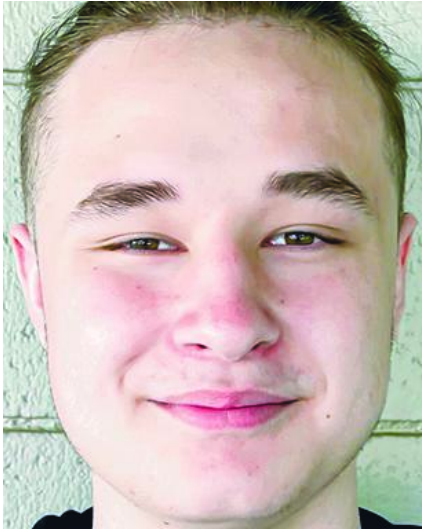
Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Berenice Benson

Statement:

Helena arrives at school every day, prepared and eager to learn. She always maintains a positive attitude and demonstrates a great deal of perseverance, even during more complex activities. She exemplifies citizenship daily. Helena is a compassionate learner and genuinely cares about everyone around her. She collaborates very well with peers and shows fairness in ensuring that she treats everyone with the same respect. Helena is always respectful and shows leadership skills beyond her years. Helena has demonstrated that she is trustworthy and a student of great character who will make a big difference in the world. I am so proud to have Helena in my class this year as she sets a wonderful example of how we should interact with those around us. Helena always puts her best foot forward and displays outstanding character every day!

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Student Name: Dominic Goodman

School: J.J. Cairns Continuation High School, Lindsay

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Amalia Lopez

Statement:

Dominic Goodman is an incredibly kind, empathetic, and good-hearted young man. As a student, he works to help those around him and offer his support. He volunteers to support school events and serves as the school mascot. Notably, Dominic views the world through the lens of service. He helps his teachers with tasks and serves in the Associated Student Body (ASB) to improve the school climate and culture. He has become a valued learner voice on our campus because of his insight and how he views others' needs ahead of his own.

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Student Name: Roman Espinoza

School: Kennedy Elementary School, Lindsay

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Timothy Paul

Statement:

Roman is always willing to lend a helping hand. Roman always takes initiative to clean our snack tables after snack.

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Student Name: Kimberly Lemus

School: Lincoln Elementary School, Lindsay

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Jeanette Garcia

Statement:

Kimberly is always willing to help out her fellow learners. She will set up their activities for them and help to support the needs of the younger students. She is always bringing ideas to the table to share with the learners. Kimberly does amazing face painting on the younger grades.

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Student Name: Javier Lemus-Romero

School: Loma Vista Charter, Lindsay

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Juana Moreno Martinez

Statement:

Javier is one of my learners from our Independent Studies program. Javier exemplifies all of the character traits, but I nominate Javier as a learner who most exemplifies responsibility because he has taken this character trait to the next level. Javier does what he is required to do every day. He completes his daily assignments, he shows up to weekly meetings, and Javier asks for additional help when needed. This year Javier has taken it upon himself to complete an additional class that is not required for him to graduate. When I asked him why he was doing that he said, "It was fun to learn the content I am learning in that class." I believe the statement shows his deep commitment to learning and to his personal development. Javier also exemplifies integrity in all his work, which is an essential quality to be successful in our independent studies program — just another way in which he has demonstrated himself to be a responsible learner.

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Student Name: Stephanie Lemus Espinoza

School: Reagan Elementary School, Lindsay

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Manuel Cobarruvias

Statement:

Stephanie always has a positive attitude and a caring bright big smile. She is the type of student who can change the mood in a classroom just by her positive presence. Recently she saw a new student crying and without hesitation she went to comfort her. I later saw her talking to her in the library introducing her to other students. She is always the first to volunteer to help and you can always count on her. She keeps others from making bad choices and helps anyone in need. She is such a positive leader in our school and that is why I wanted to nominate her.

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Student Name: Yanet Gomez

School: Roosevelt Elementary School, Lindsay

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Ana Medrano

Statement:

Yanet is a great friend, mentor and student. She excels in the classroom and helps support others to make good choices. She completes all of her tasks and is always willing to help others in and outside of the classroom. Yanet is kind and respectful to everyone she interacts with. Anytime she is asked to help she never hesitates and does it with great attitude. For example, she was asked to help monitor the younger students during recess to help them play fairly. She has taken that role very seriously and with pleasure. She truly exhibits all of the characteristics of an admirable student who deserves recognition for all that she does each and every day.

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Student Name: Ricardo Rodriguez

School: Pleasant View Elementary School, Poplar

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Tashima Irving

Statement:

I know school has just started, but this young man has already touched so many teachers and students with his genuine heart and compassionate character. Ricardo Rodriguez is a 3rd grader at Pleasant View and ever since I could remember he has exhibited a heart of gold. He is always willing to help a fellow classmate or even a student he doesn't know if they need assistance. I witnessed him giving a student a gentle pat on the back when they were in our classroom library. He was encouraging the student, regarding a situation he had. Facial expressions told it all when they both looked at each other and smiled as Ricardo patted him on the back letting him know everything was okay. There was another situation where Ricardo and another student didn't know whose \$5 (of classroom money) was left on the table. The student thought it was his and Ricardo couldn't remember if he left it there or if it really belonged to the other student. Instead of arguing Ricardo gave the student the \$5 without hesitation. My Co-Teaching partner witnessed the situation and immediately gave Ricardo \$10 (doubled his money!) because he was so willing to use simple Problem-Solving skills in that situation. I am really proud of Ricardo as he shines for all to see. He truly deserves to be recognized for his caring character.

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Student Name: Kayla Mungia

School: Pleasant View West Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Caring

Nominators: Camille Valdez and Tashima Irving

Statement:

A remarkable student who shines brightly through their exceptional caring nature is Kayla Mungia. Kayla consistently goes out of her way to show kindness and empathy to her peers, teachers, and even those she may not know well. Her willingness to lend a helping hand, offer a comforting word, and genuinely listening to others has created a warm and inclusive atmosphere within our school and her eighth-grade classroom. Kayla serves as a beacon of compassion and has a remarkable ability to make everyone feel valued and cared for. Their actions remind us of the power of simple acts of kindness and the positive impact they can have on our school and beyond.

(CITIZENSHIP)

Kayla is the Poster Child for Character at Pleasant View Elementary School. This young lady shines brightly from the East to West and North to South parts of our campus and community. Kayla is receiving this nomination for citizenship, but I can honestly nominate her for each of the Six Pillars. She is charismatically involved in so many school clubs and activities. She has been an active member of SQUAD for three years and serves on SQUAD's leadership team as well. I can count on her to help out at our school CHARACTER COUNTS! assemblies and organizes campus and after school events for both SQUAD and her junior high school campus. Kayla is not just an involved and responsible young lady but she is also compassionate and caring when it comes to her peers. I have witnessed her helping out SQUAD members who suffered from depression and anxiety during days when they were having episodes. She reaches out beyond her means to help in any way she can. I am truly excited to highlight this young lady. She is definitely worthy of the honor. Thank you, Kayla, for being an example for our students, staff, and community.

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Student Name: Armando Robles

School: Hope School, Porterville

Pillar: Caring

Nominators: Sally Ramirez and Joanie Arnold

Statement:

Armando is in the eighth grade at Hope Elementary. He has always been respectful and helpful, but this year he has gone way above what would be expected of a student. It is easy to see just how great of a student he is, but even better is how great of a person he is. Since the second week of school Armando has gone into the cafeteria to help Mrs. Rameriz. He checks the dates on the milk daily. He stocks and rotates the milk. He takes out the empty milk crates, and any food that needs to go to the dumpster. The food going to the dumpster is usually boxes of fruit that are too heavy for Mrs. Ramirez to lift. He wipes down the tables and picks up the trash that is left behind. He was never asked to do this, he just started coming to the cafeteria and offering to help. If Mrs. Ramirez starts the milk task, he will respectfully scold her, take the milk from her, and finish it on his own. Again, he is always respectful.

(CITIZENSHIP)

Outside of school Armando is on a traveling baseball team. He is always willing to help around the campus and does so with a smile on his face. He enjoys being involved in his school community and is also involved with his community outside of school. He is involved in 4-H where he raises and shows hogs. He also shows hogs out of state for livestock producers. Armando is a hardworking and a respectful young man who exemplifies many pillars of character and deserves to be recognized.

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Student Name: Jonathan Brown

School: AcCEL - Porterville, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: John Cemo

Statement:

Jonathan saw an incident on the bus involving one of his classmates and was concerned about it happening again. Jonathan talked to his friend and told him that he needed to discuss the problem with me, but his friend was afraid that he would get in trouble. Jonathan was so worried about his classmate that he took it upon himself to bring the problem to my attention. Because of his actions we were able to resolve the problems that were occurring, so that it will not happen again. Because of his actions and wanting to do the right thing I am nominating him for the Pillar of Responsibility.

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Student Name: Selene Vargas Andrade

School: Bartlett Middle School, Porterville

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Nayeli Colunga

Statement:

Selene is a true exemplar of an individual who will do what is least expected of her to help those around her. Selene recently helped a classmate get organized and prepared for a class she did not have. She made sure this student was ready for his upcoming notebook check. Selene not only did this, but she has also made this student feel welcomed and a part of the class. Selene has impacted this young individual's life positively in a way that he will always remember. The young gentleman has commented that Selene is his best friend and will never forget her name. Selene did what she did not for attention but because she saw her family in need of help and instead of letting him struggle, she showed citizenship.

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Student Name: Yocelin Aguilar

School: Belleview Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Judith Church

Statement:

Yocelin is always doing the right thing. She is a great student and is always on task.

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Student Name: Jaydah Gonzalez

School: Burton Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Leslee Taylor

Statement:

Jaydah is a good citizen. She does little things all day long to help things run very smoothly. It starts out first thing, with breakfast. She lays out the items each day, lays the clipboard on the teacher's desk, and then afterwards, she loads up the wagon, puts the clipboard in, and then returns the wagon to the cafeteria. She has never been asked or taught these details. She just watched and took it upon herself. And this is just one example of her taking things on. She sees a need, and she jumps in to help. She definitely does her share in our school community. We are so glad she's a part of Burton Elementary — a wonderful part!

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Student Name: Paxton Maynor

School: Burton Middle School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Betsy Bautista

Statement:

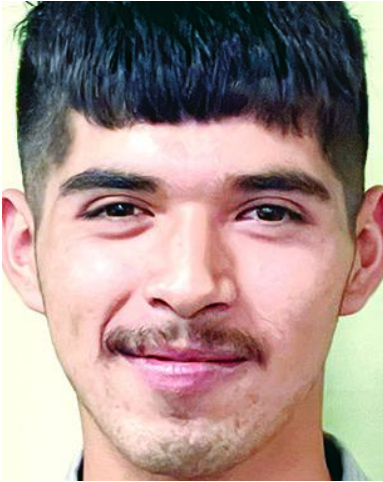
Paxton Maynor exemplifies responsibility both on and off the field. One notable instance of his responsibility is evident in his commitment to improving his science grades. Despite initially struggling with a low grade in the subject, Paxton didn't shy away from his academic responsibilities. Instead, he took the initiative to attend extra help sessions, diligently completed make-up assignments, and consistently sought ways to boost his grade. This proactive approach to his education demonstrates his strong sense of responsibility towards his academic commitments.

Moreover, Paxton's responsible attitude extends beyond the classroom. On the football field, he leads by example as the team's quarterback. His dedication to practice, punctuality, and willingness to take responsibility for the team's performance are evident in every game. Paxton understands that as a quarterback, he plays a critical role in the team's success, and he takes this responsibility seriously.

Additionally, Paxton's participation in group activities showcases his sense of responsibility towards teamwork. Whether it's collaborating on school projects or working with his teammates on the field, he consistently contributes his best efforts and encourages others to do the same. His leadership and accountability make him a role model for responsible behavior among his peers.

In summary, Paxton's commitment to improving his academic performance, leadership as a quarterback, and active participation in group activities all reflect his strong sense of responsibility. He sets a positive example for those around him, emphasizing the importance of taking ownership of one's actions and obligations in both academic and extracurricular pursuits.

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Student Name: Rene Garcia

School: Butterfield Charter School, Porterville

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Stan Dillon

Statement:

Rene has been a model student since he transferred from Porterville Military Academy. He has gone above and beyond in being responsible with his schoolwork. Not only does he come prepared each week, but he comes prepared with quality work at a very high standard. He will be graduating mid-term first semester prepared to join the graduates of Butterfield Charter School!

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Student Names: Andrea Andrade Delgado
and Kimberly Perez

School: Granite Hills High School, Porterville

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Richard Lambie

Statement:

What a fabulous job Andrea Andrade Delgado and Kimberly Perez did presenting the ambassador Clean Up Campaign at Olive Street Elementary School on Friday! This is a campaign the ambassadors designed for launch this year and we are so proud. With Andrea and Kimberly's permission, I'm attaching two videos. Enjoy!

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Student Name: Sophia Colunga

School: Harmony Magnet Academy, Strathmore

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Nayirah Dosu

Statement:

Sophia Colunga is one of, if not, the most responsible and hardest working freshmen I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. She is a two-sport, varsity athlete this fall semester and was also just nominated Freshman Class President! On most days, Sophia goes to cheerleading practice then stays for volleyball practice. Despite her busy schedule, Sophia always makes sure her homework is done, continues practicing her sports at home, and still makes time to be present and enjoy her family and friends.

No matter what she does, Sophia always gives a 110% effort. That includes what she does when others are watching and when they're not. After a home game loss, Sophia stayed after to help clean up trash from the bleachers. She even walked back and forth to make sure she didn't miss anything. Nobody told her to do it. In fact, the gym was almost empty at the time. It stands out because even though her team didn't get the win that night, she showed a lot of leadership and responsibility by staying and taking the time to help keep her school clean. There's a lot of ways to show pride and sportsmanship in the uniform you wear, and she showed it with her actions.

Another example of how responsible Sophia is, is her work with her freshman classmates for homecoming week. It didn't matter that she had just finished two practices, she stayed well into the night with her classmates to finish the freshman float. With support from the freshman class and their families, that float went on to win the float contest and shock the senior class.

I am proud to nominate Sophia Colunga for the Pillar of Responsibility as she is one of the most selfless and responsible students I have ever known.

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Student Name: Emily Bautista

School: Jim Maples Academy, Porterville

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Donald Ramey

Statement:

This young lady started the school year with enthusiasm and focus. She jumped right in and helped to organize the classroom as well as assisting other students with whatever needed to be done. I am very excited to have such a trustworthy and prepared learner in my class! I am confident that she will be a wonderful example to the other students in our classroom!

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Student Name: Rodrigo Nunez

School: John J. Doyle Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Irma Martinez

Statement:

When I think of the word respect, an image of my student, Rodrigo comes to mind. He shows respect first thing in the morning when he greets me with a "Good morning, Mrs. Martinez".

Throughout the day, he continues being respectful by showing the adults in the classroom how a true scholar behaves. He works hard on his assignments and doesn't hesitate to ask for help when needed. Rodrigo is also respectful to his peers. He listens to them as we have class discussions and as he works well with them in groups. He takes charge when needed but does allow the others to add their piece to the discussion. He definitely treats others the way he wants to be treated.

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Student Name: Bentley Penn

School: Los Robles Elementary School, Porterville

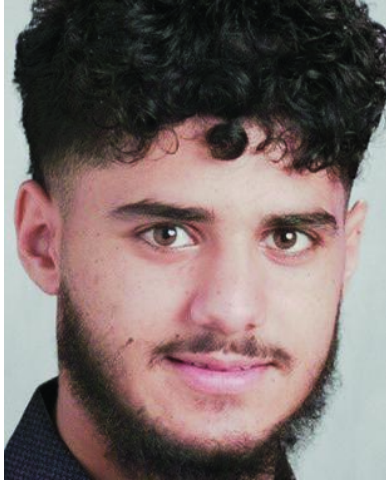
Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Christina Dole

Statement:

Bentley Penn is a respectful Lobo in our class. Bentley is new to our campus, but already he is exceeding at demonstrating our HOWL expectations across campus. If you were to meet Bentley, you would be meeting a sweet, kind, young man who speaks with respect to adults and his peers. Some situations can be hard, but no matter what, I can count on him to tell me the truth and be respectful. For example, Bentley demonstrates his ability of CHARACTER COUNTS! by being respectful to her peers, coming to an adult for help with a situation, and choosing to do what is right and fair by others. I am so happy to have Bentley in my class this year!

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Student Name: Mohammed Abdullah

School: Monache High School, Porterville

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Jennifer Giannetto

Statement:

Mohammed Abdullah takes time to visit, check in, share joy with the students in Monache's K1 classroom. We first met Mohammed when his older brother was enrolled in the AcCEL program classroom at Monache. Mohammed has maintained a connection with the students and staff in classroom K1. He is now a student assistant. He is authentic with his interactions with the students. He can be anywhere on campus and notice a need that one of the students might have. He provides comfort and care without bringing any attention to himself. He is loved by the students and staff. His maturity allows for him to offer guidance and friendship to his peers with special needs with the utmost respect and dignity. His interactions with others are truly beautiful to encounter.

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Student Name: Chloe Alvarado

School: Monte Vista Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Robyn Dunn

Statement:

Chloe is a great citizen. She has a strong sense of right and wrong and is always willing to go over and beyond to help others.

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Student Name: Mason Duran

School: Oak Grove Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Rachel McCusker

Statement:

Mason has shown respect towards his peers inside and outside of the classroom by taking the time to listen and help them out. Mason is always showing the 4 L's in class by looking, listening, lowering his voice, and leaning in to listen to his peers' opinions. Mason follows the golden rule by treating others the way he would want to be treated. Mason is always giving his full attention to me when I'm speaking to the whole class and is the first to put up the hand signal for time out when the class is being loud or extra chatty. Mason always encourages other students around him.

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Student Name: Ayleen Bedolla

School: Olive Street Elementary School, Porterville

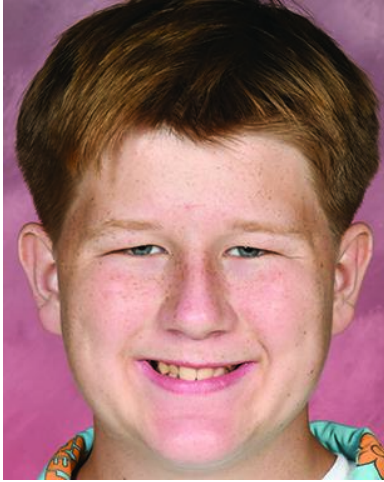
Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Maribel Alcantar

Statement:

Ayleen Bedolla is always helping the community and family. Ayleen spends time with her neighbor who is a veteran and keeps him company since he doesn't have anyone to visit him.

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Student Name: Zackary Wells

School: Pioneer Middle School, Porterville

Pillar: Caring

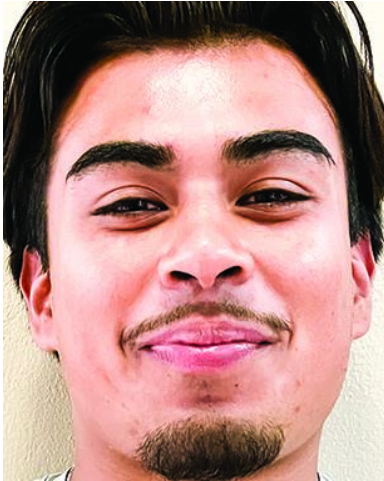
Nominator: Mikaela Carter

Statement:

Zackary exhibits positive character traits but being caring exemplifies his regular behavior. Zackary has struggled with others not always being kind to him, but continues to model how to treat people. He is constantly helping students and staff with a variety of tasks. Zackary spent his time at the Renaissance Fair volunteering his time in a booth opposed to enjoying the games. He truly enjoys helping others. When the school has functions for students, Zackary will help set up and pick up trash afterwards. He volunteers to help the custodians with trash pick and up cleaning without being prompted or asked to do so. Additionally, Zackary will help students who are in distress, volunteer to walk others to class if needed, and encourage others. He will compliment others and make people feel good about themselves. Zackary loves animals; he takes care of his dogs; feeding, bathing, playing, and walking them. He will save animals that are hurt or hungry. He recently saved a baby bird who was not able to fly.

Zackary is currently creating a business plan to earn money. He has created flyers for advertising and to gain customers. He is doing spider web removal outside of homes. Overall, Zackary is a kind, caring, and hard-working young man.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Jose Saldana

School: Porterville High School, Porterville

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Larry Herrera

Statement:

Jose (Angel) Saldana is an incredibly trustworthy student-athlete. As Angel's football coach, I've seen him work hard to become a leader on the field through his actions. He can always be seen doing what is right and working hard. I trust him to lead the Early Out drills by himself. That leadership is rare and I applaud him for it. He is an amazing individual and I am so proud of him.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Braden Martin

School: Porterville Military Academy, Porterville

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Rudy Cardona

Statement:

Braden Martin is a senior at Porterville Military Academy. Braden will be a part of the first six-year graduation class since the seventh-twelfth grade school opened in 2018. In addition to being on the Dean's Academic List of high performing students, Braden is the school's cadet commander, having achieved the highest student leadership position on campus. He is a role model for other students, as a student-athlete, respectful, caring, and has earned the trustworthiness of his fellow students. As the cadet commander, he is responsible for ensuring all new students successfully complete the school's entrance camp, provides school staff with feedback, collaborates with on-campus clubs, and leads his own cadet staff to plan and execute events, training, and community contact. Braden leads by example in being courteous to others, works through changes, communicates effectively and is fair in his leadership approach with other students.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Diego Avalos

School: Roche Avenue Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Sarah Scott

Statement:

Diego is careful and fair in every part of his day at school. He embodies fairness with his kindness to others, respectfulness when playing with others and his common sense for following and playing by the rules. I can rely on him to know the exact process for any game or routine in class.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Maria Bedolla

School: Santa Fe Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Joseph McIntire

Statement:

Maria is a constant reminder of what true responsibility looks like. She is always organized, prepared, on time, and ready to learn. Even when she is absent, she completes missing work before her return to campus. Whereas many must develop an understanding of newly introduced rules and procedures, Maria can convert one conversation into immediate action. For those active in education, they have met “a Maria.” The student who produces exemplary work with minimal to no prompting. The student who is willing to help others and share their strategies. The student whose intrinsic motivation drives their success. The student who is so well-behaved that often they are overlooked when it comes to receiving recognition for their efforts. Please help me to recognize Maria Bedolla for her exemplary display of responsibility.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Grant Balangue

School: Summit Charter Academy Mathew Campus,
Porterville

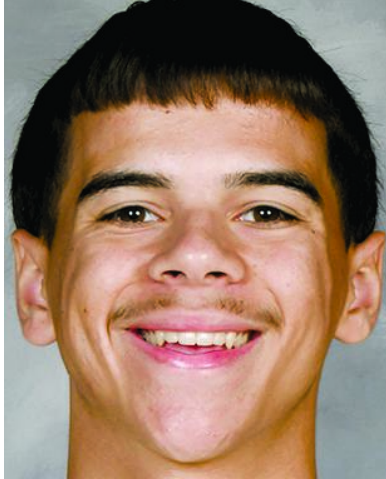
Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Vanessa Orozco

Statement:

Grant Balangue always has a smile on his face and is willing to help those in his community. He helps with keeping the classroom and school community clean and will always go above and beyond. Grant has a big heart, and understands what it is to be a good citizen in and out of the classroom.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Jayden Barrios

School: Summit Charter Collegiate Academy, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Kimberly Wertman

Statement:

Jayden Barrios is an outstanding student. Not only is he an outstanding student but he has tremendous character as well. He is the first to help someone out in class while working hard. I have had Jayden as a student since he was a freshman and he has demonstrated stellar character throughout his high school years. He demonstrates his leadership qualities in class consistently which leads others in a positive manner. Jayden truly deserves this CHARACTER COUNTS! Award for 2023!

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Stormi Farmer

School: Summit Charter Intermediate Academy,
Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Samuel Novinger

Statement:

Stormi started the year off right — being helpful in the classroom. She cares about the assignments and spends extra time improving her skills. She works well collectively with others and is concerned with wanting to do artwork to showcase to a public audience. I noticed she cared about learning the new digital program we started this year and was already looking for ways to help other students with the submission process. She pays attention to the details and is concerned with the objective and reaching her full potential. I appreciate her ability to communicate her innovative ideas. She shows a concern for improving in the arts and doing more than the expected amount by going above and beyond.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Angelique Ibarra

School: West Putnam Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Sean Phillips

Statement:

Angelique is honest. She doesn't lie, cheat, or steal. She always keeps her promises and she does what she says she will do. She is also a good friend to many of her classmates. She also treats others like she wants to be treated. Angelique is a great example of a trustworthy student.

Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives



Student Name: Carter Christenson

School: Westfield Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Renee Carson

Statement:

Carter Christenson exemplifies the Pillar of Trustworthiness in every aspect of his behavior and interactions within my classroom. His consistent and responsible approach to his academic responsibilities, such as willingly admitting when he forgets homework and offering to make up for it during recess or the next day, demonstrates his integrity.

Carter's leadership qualities also highlight his trustworthiness. He not only takes charge of group projects and assignments but also ensures that his peers stay on task, fostering an environment of reliability and accountability within the group. His ability to lead effectively and have others willingly follow him speaks volumes about the trust his classmates place in him.

I recently asked Carter to take on a special project of creating a 9/11 Memorial slide show based on his recent visit to Ground Zero. His willingness to take on this project and the exceptional quality, attention to detail, and creativity of his work were beyond impressive. I will use his slide show for years to come.

Beyond his academic accomplishments and leadership, what truly sets Carter apart is his genuine kindness and compassion. His dedication to helping fellow students, especially those who may struggle or feel excluded, demonstrates a trustworthy and caring character. By making an effort to include and engage with others, he creates a sense of trust and belonging in our classroom.

In summary, Carter Christenson embodies the Pillar of Trustworthiness through his responsible behavior, leadership qualities, commitment to excellence, and his compassionate nature. He is truly deserving of recognition for this pillar, as he serves as an outstanding example of trust and reliability for his peers, and he is someone all teachers can unquestionably count on to do the right thing.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Pearla Farah

School: William R. Buckley Elementary School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Melissa Emerson

Statement:

Pearla epitomizes the Pillar of Trustworthiness. She can be counted on to always do her job to the best of her ability. She takes ownership for her actions and is always doing what she is supposed to be doing. I am pleased to recognize Pearla for the CHARACTER COUNTS! award for the Pillar of Responsibility. She not only takes care of herself, but she helps those around her that may be struggling. She has a kind heart, and we are blessed to have her as part of our school community.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Zydelle Murguia

School: Richgrove School, Richgrove

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Adena Joseph

Statement:

Zydelle Murguia is a second-grader at Richgrove Elementary School. She is a member of the Garden club as well. Zydelle is fair and caring towards others. When a student misplaced his treat after gardening, she willingly gave him hers. Whenever there is a conflict, Zydelle helps to resolve the conflict. She also strives to follow the rules and play fair. Great job Zydelle!

Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives



Student Name: Natalia Bedolla

School: Saucelito School, Terra Bella

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Courtney Castle

Statement:

As an eighth-grader, we have had the pleasure of watching Natalia grow over the course of her schooling with us. Natalia is always practicing fairness in all that she does, whether she is in the classroom, on the court or on the playground. Natalia demonstrates character in her daily actions by following school rules and being a role model for other students on campus. She plays multiple sports for our school during the year and shows integrity and sportsmanship by supporting her fellow teammates as well as supporting the players on the opposing team. In volleyball, if the referee cannot clearly see a line, Natalia will be truthful in calling the ball appropriately even if that means the other team earns the point. In the classroom Natalia is a model student. She is focused and diligent in her studies. She participates in all activities and labs and strives to make the most of every learning opportunity.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Abel Monk

School: Springville Union School, Springville

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Michele Punian

Statement:

Able Monk is a very joyful child. His peers say that he is fair on the playground as well as in the classroom, and he always cheers people on when they do something good. Abel is not afraid to communicate his feelings of discomfort or praise. He is willing and able to talk about an issue through using his opinion in a way that is neither rude or boastful. Our third-grade class voted Abel as the most respectful student because of his actions. Able works well in a group. Abel takes the time to explain a solution to a math problem so his teammate can have a better understanding of the problem.

Able gives his opinions clearly and makes eye contact in a genuine way. He is very polite when he speaks to others whether they are adults or peers. He is a good example of respect. I am very proud of his ability to reach this achievement.

**Tulare County Office of Education
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Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Liam Newsom

School: St. Anne's School, Porterville

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Sylvia Herrera

Statement:

Liam is an eighth grader and can be seen helping other students at the school. He is kind and loving to all ages. He has been especially helpful in the TK classroom during book buddies. He always gravitates to some of our students with Autism and is always willing to read or play with them based on their needs. Sometimes you will find kids holding his hand or climbing on him. Sometimes this can be embarrassing for older boys, but Liam's kind heart has no concern for what others think.

He comforts and helps the littles in any way he can. The Tk teachers have been grateful to see such a helpful and kind-hearted young man around their students.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Valeria Anguiano

School: Strathmore Elementary School, Strathmore

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Candy Carrizosa

Statement:

Valeria demonstrates her caring trait with her actions! She is a very kind student. Valeria's initiative to show compassion has helped build on other students' social and emotional needs. In my classroom we have friends with different needs. I have a student who is extremely scared to use the restroom. Without being prompt or asked, one day Valeria went and held the student's hand and told her, "Don't be scared, come on I'll walk you to the restroom and wait outside until you come out." The student agreed. Valeria assisted her with washing her hands. When they returned, I heard Valeria say, "See everything is okay." She continued to assist and now the child goes on her own. That was not all, Valeria also encouraged this child to play out at recess. This child was always next to yard supervision waiting for the bell to ring. Valeria would go and encourage her to go and play with her. The child now plays with her peers.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Paola Carcamo Lovo

School: Strathmore High School, Strathmore

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Viviana Franco

Statement:

I nominate Paola Carcamo Lovo for the Pillar of Responsibility. This young lady has demonstrated all the pillars of character and although she has faced many obstacles, she has excelled academically, even with her language limitations. She is not only responsible with her schoolwork, but she also hurries every day after school to work at a local family-owned restaurant, because she also helps support her family in Honduras. She sends them whatever money that she saves. At her young age, Paola is a very mature and responsible individual, who has proven resiliency that is admirable, and I am very proud of her for that.

Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives



Student Name: Jasmine Avalos Mondragon

School: Strathmore Middle School, Strathmore

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Stephen Sobko

Statement:

Jasmine Avalos Mondragon is currently in 5th grade PE, and I have been her teacher and coach for a little over a year now. I have taught and coached at multiple different schools throughout my career. Jasmine is one of the most respectful, responsible, and thriving students I have ever worked with. She has consistently been a leader amongst her peers in class and leads her classmates in various classroom activities which are still new to many students as if she has been preparing to do so for years. Jasmine even gives her classmates tips on how to stretch and exercise correctly. She has the entire grade level organized each day and ready to participate in PE.

Ms. Avalos Mondragon has a level and sense of responsibility which transcends what I believed could be accomplished by any young school-age student in such a short amount of time. She takes all of her tasks throughout her day seriously and has the respect of all of her peers, teachers and family members. I look forward to having her in my classes for the next four years and I know she will continue to thrive and be responsible throughout her life. I wish everyone could have the opportunity to work with a student like her at least once in their career to feel the enjoyment and surprise I have been fortunate to have for almost two years.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Michelle Sanchez

School: Sunnyside Union School, Strathmore

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Alicia Franco

Statement:

Michelle is truly deserving of recognition for her exceptional display of caring. She consistently goes out of their way to help her classmates and make everyone feel included. For example, she often checks in on their peers who might be struggling and offers a helping hand without hesitation. During group projects, she makes sure everyone's voice is heard and ideas are considered, showing their genuine concern for others' perspectives. Additionally, Michelle has been observed comforting new students on their first day, making them feel welcome and supported. Every day Michelle checks on me. Her actions highlight her empathy and willingness to make a positive difference in the lives of those around her.

Tulare County Office of Education
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Student Name: Isabella Cruz

School: Woodville Union School, Porterville

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Yesenia Martinez

Statement:

I would hear the name of Isabella around campus, but I never knew who she was until last school year. It was then that I had the pleasure of meeting her as a student. Many great words describe Isabella but the one that keeps coming to my mind is responsibility.

Isabella has shown responsibility in many ways like helping to take care of her sisters. She took responsibility for taking her sister to kindergarten last year and made sure she was well before she left. This year, I see her walking with her two sisters. One is taken to UTK and the other to first grade. Every day I see her, and I stare because I see how gentle and kind she is to her sisters. Being responsible is ensuring that she does what her mom has asked of her.

You might think her responsibility is only taking her siblings to class, but last year, I saw how responsibility is part of her growing character. We take students to the "Ultimate Warrior Trip" at Giovanni's Pizzeria (for students who have good grades, show character and if they have perfect attendance). On these two trips, I saw how Isabella walked around with her sister to make sure her sister ate, went to the bathroom, and played. On one occasion, I saw how she gave her sister coins to put into the machine so they could have fun.

Isabella is a selfless individual who will always do the right thing because she wants others to be responsible too. We had a student in our class who needed to develop responsibility. Isabella would sit with him and encouraged him to work and do better. She worked all year with him and he loved being next to her and working with her.

Isabella is no longer in my class, but she comes every morning and tells me how she helps her mom and her siblings. She always says it with a smile and with pride, she's a great responsible person to have around!