



Redwood’s Montgomery nets career coaching win No. 700

SPORTS, 1B

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CHARACTER COUNTS!

Student made sure his friend had shoes



Alejandro Chavarin, a Palo Verde Union Elementary School student, models the Character Counts! Caring Pillar traits. PROVIDED BY TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Palo Verde’s Chavarin exemplifies generosity and thoughtfulness

Meade Trueworthy
Character Counts!

A student thinking about someone else and taking the time to help them is a refreshing change in a time when too often those in need go overlooked. An act of kindness that comes from the heart is noteworthy and worth celebrating.

Alejandro Chavarin, a Palo Verde Union Elementary School student, models the Character Counts! Caring Pillar traits. He is kind, compassionate, and helped someone less fortunate than himself. His story of generosity and thoughtfulness is a story that needs to be told.

Teacher Audra Sanchez nominated Alejandro after a teacher’s aide saw the boy discreetly bring a new pair of shoes to school for a friend who needed them.

“It touches my heart and is something I have never seen a student do before,” Sanchez said. “Alejandro is the definition of caring and he deserves this

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Character Counts! Caring finalists

Meade Trueworthy
Character Counts!

Student Name: Josiah A. Diaz
Grade: 5
School: Pinkham Elementary School, Visalia

Statement:
Nominator Jennifer Kirkman says, “While Josiah is a strong individual, he is equally emphatic. Josiah deeply cares about his family, his classmates, teachers, and staff. Part of my role as a school counselor is to implement a schoolwide kindness week. When I was talking with him about kindness week, he asked me if he could get additional cards to thank staff members and students who have helped him. He is continually looking for an extra person to thank and exhibits genuine gratitude. With Josiah, it is a genuine deep interest in helping his fellow community members. His level of responsibility is above that of most students I work with, he



Diaz

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Newsom to make visit to Israel

Trần Nguyễn
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Gov. Gavin Newsom is planning a one-day visit to Israel this week to meet people affected by that country’s war with Hamas, stopping over en route to China where he will discuss policies to curb global warming.

The Democratic governor is set to arrive Friday in Israel with plans to depart later that same day for Hong Kong. His office didn’t immediately answer questions about his schedule and activities in Israel.

“I’m on my way to Israel,” Newsom confirmed in a message posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. “I’ll be meeting with those impacted by the horrific terrorist attacks and offering California’s support.”

California is also sending medical supplies to the region, including provisions intended for the Gaza Strip, his office said.

On Wednesday, Newsom announced more security funding for places of worship in California, including \$10 million to immediately increase the police presence at such places as mosques and synagogues.

“Amid the horror unfolding in the Middle East following the unconscionable terrorist attacks in Israel, California is authorizing the immediate deployment of funds to increase security” at worship sites, Newsom said in a statement. “No matter how and where one prays, every Californian deserves to be safe.”

California is home to the largest population of Arab Americans in the United States, according to the Arab American Institute. It also has the second largest populations of Jews in the U.S., according to the American Jewish Population Project at Brandeis University.

The war that began on Oct. 7 after Hamas militants stormed into Israel, and Israel vowed to destroy the militant group, has become the deadliest of five Gaza wars for both sides.

Newsom’s visit comes after New York Gov. Kathy Hochul arrived Wednesday in Israel to offer solidarity and support. President Joe Biden also wrapped up a 7 1/2-hour visit to Israel that same day in which he negotiated a deal for limited humanitarian aid into Gaza from Egypt.

Newsom is scheduled to participate in a weeklong tour focused on climate change policies in China, starting in Hong Kong on Monday. He will also visit Beijing, Shanghai and the provinces of Guangdong and Jiangsu.



Gov. Gavin Newsom will visit Israel on Friday to meet with those impacted by the violence ahead of his planned trip in China to discuss policies to curb global warming. JOSÉ LUIS VILLEGAS/AP FILE

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Caring finalists

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genuinely feels a desire to be a change agent in our community.”



Mateo Perez Rodriguez

Student Name: Mateo Perez Rodriguez

Grade: Kindergarten

School: Westfield Elementary School, Porterville

Statement:

Nominator Angelica Bermudez says, “Mateo comes to school every single day with the happiest attitude and positive aura. He greets not just teachers, but most staff members, with a big smile. He is outgoing, expressive, and enjoys giving hugs and smiles. When a classmate is in need, Mateo is quick to find an adult. On the first day of school, he made his teacher a paper flower bouquet and said he made it out of paper so they would last forever. He is very empathetic and always tries to make others feel better when he sees they might be upset. He is honest, treats all staff and students with respect, and loves to give. He is hardworking, loves to learn, and always does his absolute best.”



Melissa Rodriguez

Student Name: Melissa Rodriguez

Grade: 4

School: Strathmore Elementary School, Strathmore

Statement:

Nominator Joni Medina says, “Melissa exemplifies kindness to anyone lucky enough to cross her path. She has integrity as she doesn’t do kind deeds in hope of recognition. Melissa does not expect anyone to notice or comment when she quietly lends a helping hand or shows generosity. One of the many times I caught her being thoughtful was when she went to my class treasure box. After earning a month’s worth of stickers, she finally got to pick a treasure. On her way out of my classroom, I asked her what she chose. With the biggest smile, Melissa held up a toy truck and said, ‘I got a toy for my baby brother!’ Undoubtedly, Melissa’s kindness makes the world a better place!”



Ricardo Rodriguez

Student Name: Ricardo Rodriguez

Grade: 3

School: Pleasant View Elementary School, Poplar

Statement:

Nominator Tashima Irving says, “This young man has already touched so many teachers and students with his genuine heart and compassionate character. I witnessed Ricardo giving a student a gentle pat on the back when they were in our classroom library. He was encouraging the student regarding a situation. Facial expressions told it all when they both looked at each other and smiled as Ricardo patted him on

CHARACTER COUNTS!

Student: Clarissa Vasquez

Grade: 1

School: Pleasant Elementary School

Comment: Pleasant Elementary School staff share, “Clarissa has a beautiful heart and a smile that can light up the room. She truly exemplifies all the characteristics of the Six Pillars of Character and has been chosen to represent her classroom for trustworthiness because she is a good friend, she is honest in her words and actions, and she always tells the truth. She shows trustworthiness by doing the right thing in all circumstances and is a true example for others.”

Pillar Represented: Trustworthiness

Through the CHARACTER COUNTS! program, the Tulare County Office of Education and the *Visalia Times-Delta/Tulare Advance-Register* recognize local students who exhibit good character.



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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. He truly deserves to be recognized for his caring character.”

Chavarin

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award for his generosity and kindness.”

Alejandro’s mother also deserves credit for nurturing her son’s compassion.

Sanchez wrote the mother a note to tell her of Alejandro’s generosity. The mother said she knew her son cared so much she had to help.

“Alejandro would often mention (to his mom) feeling bad for this friend,” the boy’s teacher said. “So she took him to buy shoes to replace the pair that had holes in them”.

This generous, kind, and compassionate act of helping someone in need exemplifies the Character Counts! Caring Pillar.

Alejandro wanted no recognition for what he did.

His mother said her son was overcome with emotion.

“That day he got home,” his mother said. “He didn’t talk about it much but I could see he wanted to cry.”

Alejandro is deserving of the Character Counts! Caring Award and hopefully his story will inspire others to act in such a thoughtful and generous manner when witnessing someone in need.

What makes a caring student?

- They are kind
- They are compassionate
- They show they care about others
- They express the quality of thankfulness
- They are forgiving
- They help people in need
- They do their share of work
- They are friendly
- They are empathetic and consider how others feel



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