

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



Student Name: Keyla Tortoledo

School: Annie R. Mitchell Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Jessica Cisneros

Statement:

Keyla comes to class every single day prepared and ready to do her absolute best. She has maintained perfect attendance, quickly learned our classroom expectations and followed them without reminders. Keyla has completed every single homework assignment, and class assignment. During independent work time, Keyla understands how important every minute is and uses her time wisely to complete her work. Keyla is an exceptional role model for the pillar of responsibility!

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



Student Name: Daniela Yanez

School: Blue Oak Academy, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Jocelyn Hendershot

Statement:

Daniela is a role model student who exhibits respect. She is quick to follow directions and exemplifies “doing what is right, because it is right” our school motto. She respects her peers by listening attentively, giving them personal space, and assisting them if they need help. She respects classroom property by being responsible with where she puts her papers and how she uses class supplies. Daniela comes to school ready and eager to learn, showing respect for herself and the many things she can accomplish.

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



Student Name: Mason Esquerra

School: Compass Program, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Amayrani Lozano

Statement:

Mason is a sweet and caring student. She is always helping her peers when they are upset and wants to include everyone when she is playing a game. When other students or staff miss school; she asks if they are okay and gets sad when they are not feeling well. Mason is excited when they come back and tells them she is happy they are feeling better. If she ever accidentally does anything to upset another student, she quickly apologizes and checks to see if her peer is okay. Mason is a great role model for other students and is a true example of being helpful, kind, and generous.

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



Student Name: Zayden Ramirez Ibarra

School: Conyer Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Christopher Marsh

Statement:

Zayden comes into the classroom with a smile, ready to learn, he has a positive attitude, and says "good morning". This young man is prepared every day with his Chromebook, puts it away when asked and starts to read silently. Zayden shows self-control at all times and uses self-awareness of when to make a decision on doing the right thing

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



Student Name: Melody Stedman

School: Crestwood Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Raul Gonzalez

Statement:

Melody is a very caring young lady. In our class we have a student who is struggling with the adjustment to school and sometimes has big emotions. Melody has taken this student under her wing. She comforts her classmate throughout the day; when she sees the student having a rough time. Melody is a great friend who cares about her peers.

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



Student Name: Jennifer Rivera Saucedo

School: Crowley Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Kara Wilson

Statement:

Jennifer has gone above and beyond what is expected of her during the day-to-day of our after-school program. She holds herself accountable for any actions she makes daily, along with others both inside and outside of the classroom. During this school year alone, she has even helped our newer Program Leaders settle into their roles during our Community Circle time by helping through yoga, Table Talk (a healthy eating/nutrition program designed to have students learn and practice healthy habits), and an SEL discussion. Jennifer is also always aware of when it is time to learn, to focus on her work, and when to have fun. No matter the task that is set before her, she has always done her best and never gives up, knowing when to ask for help on things she knows she might struggle with. She is an excellent role model for her peers and for the younger students who emulate her behaviors throughout the day. It has been an absolute pleasure and delight to watch Jennifer grow and become who she is today since that first fateful meeting in my first-grade class when I first started to work in the after-school program here at Crowley Elementary five years ago.

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CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Gilbert Salinas

School: Denton Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Frank Ghiglia

Statement:

Gilbert started the year with a little bit of a struggle academically, finding that his new grade level was quite a challenge from day one! While this can be typical for many students, what makes Gilbert special is his growth mindset and willingness to persevere through any challenge. Like many students, reading, writing, and math did not come easy to him. Although Gilbert didn't immediately find success, his hard work, participation, asking questions, answering questions, asking his teacher for more lessons to help him grow, and practicing explaining his understanding to his peers, were all strategies that helped him find academic success. He now demonstrates amazing leadership both academically and behaviorally, with students in the classroom and at recess following his exceptional example. We are incredibly proud of his efforts!

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CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Reah Florez

School: El Diamante High School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Tina Guzman

Statement:

Reah has the gentlest and kindest soul I have ever met. She is very conscientious of students in our class with special health needs and makes sure those needs are met during class activities. For example, during our nutrition unit students could bring in foods or drinks that aligned with their poster projects and she made sure that our student with a special diet had a non-sugary drink so she wouldn't be left out. When we've had students including myself who are out with illnesses, she is very concerned and checks in. She has a huge heart and goes the extra mile to make sure everyone is included.

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



Student Name: Honey Posadas

School: Four Creeks Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Greg Fowler

Statement:

Honey Posadas is a model fifth grade student in my classroom. She is always on task, always completes her work to the best of her ability (which is at a very high level), and she asks questions when she doesn't understand something. She is a group leader, so she also helps others to stay focused, stay on task, and understand a lesson that they are struggling with. She is always the first one done on most assignments and is on top of extensions to the lesson or research assignments that will help other learning skills. She does not talk out of turn, but always answers my questions when she is asked. She is neat and organized, which are skills I usually don't see before seventh grade in students. She could be successful in any classroom, but I am lucky enough to have her in mine.

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



Student Name: Mason Munoz

School: Global Learning Charter School, Visalia

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Nicole Lemon-Newman

Statement:

In the classroom, Mason consistently demonstrates a remarkable commitment to fairness. His interactions with peers are characterized by an unwavering sense of equity, whether participating in group discussions or collaborating on projects. Mason ensures that everyone's voice is heard and respected. Mason not only refrains from favoritism, but actively seeks to create an inclusive environment where every classmate has an equal opportunity to excel. His fairness extends beyond social dynamics; they exhibit an honest and principled approach to their academic endeavors. Mason adheres to classroom rules and guidelines without exception, treating each assignment, assessment, and classmate with the same level of respect and consideration. His dedication to fairness not only fosters a harmonious learning environment but also sets a commendable example for their peers.

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CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
Newspaper Student Representatives**



Student Name: Eric Maupin

School: Golden Oak Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Stephanie Hunt

Statement:

Eric is a very caring student. I can always count on him to show love and kindness to others. He will help me with any task, he talks to others in a friendly way. He also shares supplies without complaint and is patient with students. I really appreciate his caring attitude!

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



Student Name: Karina Buenrostro

School: Golden West High, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Jennifer Carlson

Statement:

Karina is a young woman who is motivated to build a successful future for herself. This young lady manages her time wisely, and is sure to check in with staff; offering a smile and a genuine "How are you doing?" In the midst of all the hurdles that life can throw, Karina has continued to keep her head held high and move forward. She came to Golden West her sophomore year, and has made growth both academically and emotionally. Karina is earning excellent grades on campus while participating in the Nurse Assist Cohort. She is the epitome of hard work and dedication.

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



Student Name: Cynthia Adame-Luna

School: Goshen Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Veronica Benavides

Statement:

I am nominating Cynthia Adame-Luna for the Kids of Character Award in the category of Caring. From the first day of the school year, Cynthia lights up our classroom with her positive energy. She is frequently looking for ways to help others and takes it upon herself to jump in when she sees her peers struggling with something. In group work, she is a leader and helps make others feel comfortable to share their ideas. In addition to helping out in our classroom, Cynthia is a peer tutor for the band, and she enjoys helping others learn something new. I was especially impressed when a new student joined our classroom, and she took it upon herself to make sure they knew where to go and how things work at our school. We are incredibly lucky to have a student like her at Goshen as a role model for her peers..

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



Student Name: Logan Hatherley

School: Grace Christian, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Brooke Bailey

Statement:

Logan has been super helpful in our class. I can always trust him to do the right thing. Not only does he let me know when someone is not doing the right thing (even if it is his closest friend), he also speaks up and lets them know that it is not the right thing for them to be doing. He will take full responsibility for anything he has done. He is so involved with all students at any grade level and lets anyone be his friend. He is an overall great student.

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



Student Name: Gabrielle Contreras

School: Green Acres Middle School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Jacky Gonzalez Lopez

Statement:

Gabrielle helps pick up trash and cleans up after others who don't pick up their trash. She always makes sure everyone around her is always listening and following the rules when the teacher is talking. Gabrielle always cares about others and is always a nice person.

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



Student Name: Moses Prieto

School: Highland Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Amanda Bennett

Statement:

Moses Prieto demonstrates Trustworthiness each and every day at school. He follows the rules and is honest, even when no one is watching. If he is unsure about doing something, he makes sure he asks before he does it. He is a loyal friend to others and stands by his words. I can trust that Moses will take care of items that are given to him, and I can rely on him to always tell the truth.

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



Student Name: Blanca Carranza

School: Houston Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Mabel Gong

Statement:

Blanca is a student who is visually impaired. Blanca is impressive in her learning capabilities. She is at the top of the class when it comes to our assessments and performance. She has always brought a happy, joyful aura into the classroom. Her laugh is infectious. She has excellent name recall of friends by the sound of their voices. She is always happy to meet new friends.

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



Student Name: Korra Patino

School: Hurley Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Sarah Van Dermeyden

Statement:

Korra always meets expectations 100% of the time. When students enter the art classroom, they often need reminders about behavior. Never Korra. She is always looking at the teacher, modeling behavior, and being an amazing student. She is polite, honest, and respects the teacher. She makes sure her friends don't leave belongings behind in the classroom, and she is always the last student out of the room because she is making one more sweep of the room to make sure it is as clean and put together as it was when she walked into the room. She does all this without being asked.

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



Student Name: Socimo Esquibel

School: La Sierra Military Academy, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Alfredo Saenz

Statement:

Cadet Esquivel has been at LSMA since the seventh grade and is on track to graduate this year. It is rare for a student to attend grades 7-12 at LSMA, but what is most impressive is the way he has and continues to do it. If I could nominate him for all the pillars I would, but the pillar of Responsibility is what best describes what Cadet Esquivel is all about. He is a cadet leader in and out of the classroom, is involved in our soccer, volleyball, and cross-country teams, and is an active member of USO. I have had the pleasure of having him in my Culinary and Music classes and he always has a great attitude for learning and treats everyone with respect, including myself and his other teachers. He is often tasked with taking new cadets and giving them the tour of campus, showing them to their classes, and making sure they get their uniform squared away. He was chosen for this task because he is a responsible person and is always doing what he is supposed to be doing. I am happy and proud to acknowledge Socimo Esquibel for the Pillar of Responsibility.

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



Student Name: Addison Cooper

School: Linwood Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Lori Irvine

Statement:

Addison sets the standard for excellence in our classroom! Because of her careful attention to detail and her ability to analyze complex information, she scores exceptionally high on everything we do in class. It's easy to forget that she's only in sixth grade. One reason Addison does so well is because she is always listening and always eager to learn. It doesn't matter if I'm talking with her or to another student. If she hears something that she doesn't know or is curious about, she looks at me and soaks up every word I say. This intense curiosity and desire to learn new things is why she knows so much! It also doesn't matter if it's Monday morning or Friday afternoon at 2:30pm Addison gives 100% of herself to everything we're doing. She is a true scholar because she chooses to learn rather than having me force her to learn. Addison goes the extra mile, no matter if it's a chapter test or a homework assignment. She cares about both equally. She fills up every line with her written response. She meticulously shows her work on every math problem, even though I'm sure she could do so much of it in her head. She follows the steps and shows her work because that's who she is. I love watching her unpack complex math problems because she is so tenacious as she reads and rereads the problem and then analyzes what is happening.

Addison is my Teacher's Assistant in my classroom economy. Rather than go for a job where she would earn a lot of money, she went for a job where she would help me and her fellow students. Whenever I need to remember something, I ask Addison to remind me, and she always does.

She is my right hand. If a student is absent, she collects all the papers they miss and helps them to understand what they've missed. This is such a huge help because it frees me up to keep teaching or working with other students rather than being relegated to collecting papers and explaining assignments.

Besides being responsible for her learning, Addison always does the right thing, no matter where she is or where I am. If I ask her to do something, she always does it. She is truly an amazing young lady!

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



Student Name: Robert Garcia

School: Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Ken Sawatsky

Statement:

Robert Garcia, who goes by Austin, shows responsibility every day. He takes care of his school supplies, such as his computer and library books. He works his hardest by reading at home, passing quizzes on the books he reads, paying attention in class, volunteering to answer questions in class, and working respectfully with his classmates. I can always count on Austin to do the right things, whether an adult is or is not watching him. I am proud to have such a responsible young man in my class like Austin.

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



Student Name: Martha Rios Cervantes

School: Mineral King Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Nieves Suarez

Statement:

Martha has shown herself to be caring not only to her peers but also with anyone to whom she speaks. She has shown all the characteristics of the six pillars of character. The pillar that she most represents is caring. She is always willing to help others when they need it. Martha only speaks Spanish so, there is a language barrier. She doesn't let that slow her down, she still tries her best to communicate with her classmates. Martha is learning English to be able to communicate with her friends. She is so caring and respectful to everyone.

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



Student Name: Marea Vidak

School: Mt. Whitney High School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Gene Mendes

Statement:

Marea is a member of the Sportsmanship Action Team Youth Council (SAT). The SAT is an extension of the Pursuing Victory with Honor program. We currently have twenty-one student-athletes representing high school athletes from across our county. I would like to nominate Marea for the Pillar of Trustworthiness. She is a remarkable young lady who helps to plan various youth driven conferences and she volunteers at many events our office produces. Ms. Vidak is not only an above average student, but a student- athlete, deeply involved in her school and has volunteered to help at the Special Olympics and many other community service projects and events. Most recently, she was an important member who, along with the SAT group, planned the Annual Huddle Youth Conference for high school athletes. She is a great young lady we could trust to facilitate and plan and partner to create the topics of the conference, do the research, and create the information that was delivered in her workshops. She, along with the other members had many planning meetings that would take place over the summer, after they spent the day at school, after practice and sometimes after high school games to prepare and plan for the conference. Marea and these student-athletes are part of the SAT by choice and are outstanding role models and leaders in their communities.

Being a member of this group there is no grade given, and they do not get paid. She has the drive and desire to help and serve.

I am honored and proud to work with Marea and this entire group of individuals who WANT to make a difference. In my opinion Marea exemplifies what the Pillar of Trustworthiness represents.

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



Student Name: Aubrey Fajardo

School: Oak Grove Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator: Rachael Ray

Statement:

Aubrey shows fairness in how she considers problems and weighs approaches to solve them. She is a careful listener who will pay attention to everyone's contribution before helping the team come to an agreement. I appreciate Aubrey's fairness, and I learn from her actions daily.

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



Student Name: Amiah Esparza

School: Pinkham Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominators: Ray Cartagena and Marleen Martinez

Statement:

Amiah Esparza represents "Be The Change"; she excels when it comes to being responsible. She has an organized binder with tabs and a pouch full of supplies she keeps in order. She writes her assignments on her agenda and checks it throughout the day. She then ends the day by checking off what she has finished, and circling what needs to get done for homework. This has helped her turn every assignment in on time.

Further, she is always at school, and she is never tardy. During her work day, she takes notes and goes over them with the AVID Focused Notes steps. These skills she is learning are helping Amiah excel in academics. She is a wonderful citizen who is helpful to her peers and looked up to by them. She is responsible for everything she does and truly values her education. Amiah is the student every teacher desires to have in their class.

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



Student Name: Jasmine Gomez

School: Redwood High School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Travis Roebuck

Statement:

During the first six weeks of this school year, I have had the pleasure of getting to know one of our new 9th grade Rangers, Jasmine Gomez. Jasmine is a responsible leader who has gained respect from her peers in both subjects I teach. Jasmine excels in Physical Education and Health class. Jasmine is the first one to motivate her classmates through hard work, and positive comments. Her integrity is consistent throughout each day, and she excels through her performance in Physical Education. She is currently a 4.0 honor roll student, whose success in the classroom is reflected by her accomplishments in her extracurricular activities. As a freshman, Jasmine was selected to the Redwood Dance Force Team. This elite level of dance and competition demonstrates the extreme talent and commitment which Jasmine possesses. In my Health class, Jasmine has taken on a mentorship role, assisting students who are struggling with our curriculum. Her leadership and integrity are why she is highly respected by her classmates and teachers. She is an inspiration to her peers. Thank you for considering Jasmine for the CHARACTER COUNTS! award.

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



Student Name: Varna Mothe

School: Riverway Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Christopher Kusserow

Statement:

Varna is a model example of what responsibility looks like. Varna is always on task and is consistently challenging herself to be the best she can possibly be. When the bell rings, she is usually the first student opening her Chromebook to log-in and start her assignments. She has never needed to be redirected and always strives for excellence on a daily basis. She consistently engages effectively with all her peers and encourages others to be the very best they can be. She is a true leader and can always be relied on to make great, kind choices. Her kindness goes a long way, and she is always striving to make this world a better place.

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



Student Name: Michael Brassfield

School: Royal Oaks Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Rochelle Ford

Statement:

Michael is a model student who continues to show others how to complete assignments, staying on task, and having great class participation.

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



Student Name: Izabella Coronado

School: Shannon Ranch Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Taylor Hendershot

Statement:

In the time that I have been able to teach Izabella Coronado, I have seen a student that I know will go on to do great things, not only because she is motivated and works hard, which are some great qualities that she possesses, but because she has a kind heart that she uses daily to serve and support her classmates and her teachers. The work she produces goes above and beyond what is asked of her. I believe that Izabella exemplifies what any teacher would look for in a student. When initially getting to teach Izabella, I noticed that she was quite shy, keeping to herself. This wasn't a negative quality, this was just the way Izabella was. After getting to talk with her throughout our years of learning together or from spending some extra time chatting after school, I realized that this student was one of the kindest and most joyful people I have ever met. She has had a tremendous impact on our classroom. She is consistently viewed as one of the top leaders in my class by her peers, who go to her and ask for guidance because they know when she speaks, they will learn if only they listen. She adds to the conversation and facilitates discussion as she continues to support everyone in their learning not because she has to, but because she wants to make this classroom a better place for learning; she makes my classroom a place for others to grow into the best versions of themselves. She challenges me to be the best teacher that I can possibly be with her questions, with her work, with her thoughts, her ideas, and with any student. In my opinion, there is no greater gift. This once shy girl has been transformed into someone who I am honored to say "She is my student. And I am truly blessed because I get the opportunity to teach her every day." She is sometimes the only bit of sunshine in my classroom and students like her are the reason that I got into the teaching profession. She is destined for greatness in all that she does and whatever the future holds for her. Izabella Coronado, I can guarantee that this world will become a better place because of her influence in it.

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



Student Name: Daniella Cardenas

School: Sycamore Valley Academy, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Andrew Alcantar

Statement:

I am writing to nominate Daniela Cardenas in recognition of her outstanding display of responsibility. Daniela has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her responsibilities, making her a prime candidate for this award. Her actions and behaviors align perfectly with the expectations of responsibility. Here are some of the compelling reasons why Daniela deserves this recognition:

- Daniela consistently meets her commitments and obligations. Whether it's completing assignments, assisting her peers, or participating in extracurricular activities offered here at Sycamore Valley Academy, she can always be counted on to follow through with dedication and diligence.
- Daniela takes ownership of her actions and decisions. She readily acknowledges her mistakes and seeks to rectify them, showing a high level of accountability for her responsibilities.
- Daniela goes above and beyond in her commitment to the community of learning in our classroom. She actively engages and volunteers, demonstrating a profound sense of responsibility towards making a positive impact on her peers' lives.
- Daniela's dedication to her studies is commendable. She consistently maintains high academic standards, reflecting her sense of responsibility and ownership towards her education.
- Daniela adeptly manages her time and priorities, ensuring that she fulfills her obligations while also actively participating in extracurricular activities, showcasing her excellent organizational skills.

With these reasons in mind, I wholeheartedly recommend Daniela Cardenas for the pillar of responsibility as a deserving recipient. Her dedication, integrity, and sense of responsibility are truly exceptional and make her a standout candidate.

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



Student Name: Aesha Elashwamy

School: University Preparatory High School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Jennifer Becerra

Statement:

Aesha spent part of her summer preparing to welcome new students on campus. Then during our new student orientation Aesha was able to see that one of the students in her group was unable to keep up with the group during the campus tour and wanted to ensure that the student didn't feel left out and was included in the day's activities. Instead of continuing with the group and leaving the student behind, she and her partner decided to have her remain behind and get to know the student as her partner continued with the tour with the other students. Aesha showed great maturity as she showed empathy for the students in her group and cared for all of them, especially the student that was unable to remain and keep up with the whole group. Rather than leave the student behind she remained with the student and spent time getting to know her, connecting with them and letting them know that our school was a place of caring individuals that were interested in making sure everyone was cared for and that everyone's individual needs were met. Aesha was so concerned that even following our orientation day she asked that I follow up with the student to ensure that they had a great experience at orientation and felt included. She demonstrated great care and empathy for her fellow students.

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



Student Name: Lilliana Castro

School: Valley Life Charter School, Visalia

Pillars: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Brandi Travis

Statement:

Lilliana always sets a great example for others on being a trustworthy individual. She follows through with her promises, and her friends can rely on her to be a good friend in good times and bad. They know that she won't talk behind their back, and they can count on her to never let them down. Lilly will do what is right, even when it might not be the option that benefits her the most; she has integrity and strong convictions. Lilly has helped others when there are disagreements or issues because she can be fair, objective, and is a big believer in finding win-win solutions. It is challenging to choose just one pillar for Lilliana since she is such a well-rounded good person.

She is respectful to not only adults, but also her peers. She has got to be one of the most responsible students I have ever had the pleasure of teaching; she is an exemplary student and still excels at multiple extracurricular activities while keeping her grades high. She is fair to everyone, and her strong moral compass helps her to follow the rules and make sure things are done properly to benefit everyone. On top of all of these great qualities, she does it all with so much kindness to others. She will go out of her way to help struggling students, teachers who need an extra hand, and just about anyone else who has a need. I chose trustworthiness to focus on for Lilliana because I know that I can absolutely trust her one hundred percent and she could be chosen for any one of the pillars and be a perfect fit.

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



Student Name: Hayden Johnson

School: Valley Oak Middle School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Emily Carrillo

Statement:

Hayden is an exceptional student and an amazing person to have in class. Hayden is one of the most hardworking students I have met. He is involved in various activities in school from sports to AVID, while maintaining a high GPA in all of his classes. Hayden is a joy to have in class as he is always doing his best, asking questions, and participating in discussions during class. His classmates also love having him around because of how helpful he is. Hayden is always willing to give a helping hand to anyone who needs it, and I have witnessed multiple times where he helps his classmates when they do not understand something in class. Hayden is respectful and an overall joy to have in class. I look forward to the amazing individual he will become.

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



Student Name: Aaliyah Cuellar

School: Veva Blunt Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Patricia Gutierrez

Statement:

Aaliyah is an extremely helpful and caring person in the classroom and is kind to her peers. She is a student who takes charge of her learning and is proactive. When she sees a need, she is the first who will respond to help. I am very Blessed to have Aaliyah in my classroom..

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



Student Name: Faith Ramos

School: Virtual Learning Program, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Heather Mackey

Statement:

Faith has made some great strides in her academic growth. She's had challenges to overcome and yet still worked hard to remain focused. She has been coached by her grandmother to persevere, looking to always find a way to improve and put in the work necessary to be the change that will one day pay off for her in very big ways. It's not easy when you view yourself in a "stuck" state or always striving and yet still struggling. Faith shared with me that she has felt behind for years and that she couldn't do it and would never see herself "improved." I am honored to have had the opportunity to get to know her as my student since her seventh-grade year in the Virtual Learning Program in V.U.S.D. and to be even luckier to have her again this year as an eighth grader. She has shown me through her actions and dedication to her learning in after school meetings, emails for clarification, questions asked in chat on Zoom or even in her assignments (submissions and resubmissions in Schoology) that she is beyond responsible. She is a role model! Faith is a role model to not just me, but to her sister, her peers and others of just what dedication to always doing what you are supposed to do, even when it gets hard, is supposed to be! I can't wait to see not just what the world has to offer her, but what she has to offer the world!

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



Student Name: Carmen Ortiz

School: Visalia Technical Early College High School,
Visalia

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator: Travis Wyrick

Statement:

Carmen Ortiz is a senior at Visalia Technical Early College. She currently serves as the FFA Chapter Vice President and was previously elected as the Chapter Treasure last year. She is outgoing, involved and cares for others. Carmen has been determined to see success with the chapter's community service activities including the "Trick or Treat" for pets drive, where students distribute fliers and collect supplies from the community that are donated to the local pet shelter. Carmen has been instrumental in making sure VTEC leadership is connected with all chapters in the community, county and state of California by being a consistent source of positivity and inclusion. Lastly, Carmen works with horses, training them and well as training others, ensuring that people in the community have a positive experience and the animals are well cared for.

Charles Handy said, "Citizenship is the chance to make a difference to the place where you belong." Carmen Ortiz has made a difference at VTEC, she continues to make a difference in the community and cares deeply for others that wish to do the same.

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



Student Name: Kaylee Myers

School: Washington Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Aaliyah Marin

Statement:

Kaylee Myers is an outstanding student and advocate on campus. She actively participates on campus through clubs and activities. She is involved in art club, movie club, spelling bee, dance, and is also an active member of our Student Leadership team. She is constantly advocating for her fellow students and is full of ideas on how to make our campus great. When participating in clubs, she effortlessly contributes new activities and ways to make others on campus feel included. Kaylee has leadership and teamwork qualities that make her a vital part of our campus and campus life.

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2023
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Student Name: Allyanna Guevara

School: Willow Glen Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Andre Navarrette II

Statement:

Alyanna has been an excellent example of Responsibility, whether she is engaging in her academic journey through note taking, participating and volunteering information in class discussions, helping her peers by communicating effectively, peer coaching, volunteering to assist as a coach's assistant for sports, or running for the office of secretary in our school's leadership team. Allyanna shows responsibility in many ways and takes pride in being active and responsible. Alyanna always makes sure she is ready for whatever the day brings by making sure she has, and uses, her resources in class to do what she can to learn and assist others. Alyanna asks questions specific to the day's learning goals. Alyanna has also decided to run for leadership secretary which shows her willingness to be a responsible school leader. Alyanna is a phenomenal student who takes responsibility for herself and always pursues success.