

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



**Student Name:** Ahriel Clemenson

**School:** Alpaugh School, Alpaugh

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Francisco Hernandez

**Statement:**

I nominate Ahriel Clemenson for the CHARACTER COUNTS! Pillar of Responsibility. Ahriel understands that in our school we value student voice and thinking. It is amazing to see her take ownership of her learning, as well as become a responsible citizen looking out for the well-being of others. For example, as she works with her group members, Ahriel asks them questions that help students elevate their voice and provoke more thinking. Furthermore, when situations become challenging, Ahriel keeps an open and positive mindset while keeping in mind that making mistakes helps her mind grow.

She does what she is supposed to do. For example, Ahriel collaborates well with her classmates throughout our day. When we have Socratic discussions, she practices self-control, as she listens to her peers' ideas and disagrees as well as agrees with them in a kind way. Lastly, she makes good choices as she treats others with kindness and respect. It is a pleasure to have Ahriel Clemenson in our classroom.

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**Student Name:** Raul Marcos

**School:** Buena Vista School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Alex Mendes

**Statement:**

Just about every morning I can expect to see Raul assisting his younger siblings on campus. The three of them walk onto campus together; Raul flanked by his two younger ones. He walks them to their class to drop off their belongings. He then leads all of them into the cafeteria for breakfast. He is quick to respond with a "Good Morning" once he is greeted. He is a very caring older brother. It's great to see a young man leading his two younger siblings by example!

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**Student Name:** Dixie Hurtado

**School:** Alila School, Earlimart

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Jessica Contreras

**Statement:**

The student is always making sure that she does what she needs to do. Even when her group is not sure what they need to do, she makes sure that she explains it to them so that they can do their work. You always see Dixie getting to work right away. She never leaves a job halfway finished if she can help it. If she does not finish an assignment in class, she makes sure that she asks if she can take it home to complete. And this is not for show. She really does work on it whether it is on the weekend or during a weekday. You can count on Dixie to do her work.

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**Student Name:** Madelyn Basurto

**School:** Earlimart Elementary School, Earlimart

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Michelle Saunders

**Statement:**

Madelyn is a very caring person. She is kind to all of her peers and respectful to all adults. Madelyn is very generous with her time. She helps out in the cafeteria everyday by cleaning the tables and making sure all is ready for the next session of food distribution. She is also very kind by organizing my classroom library, my ELD group tubs, and helping her peers in our classroom. She is a wonderful student and a perfect example of what a great character looks like.



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**Student Name:** Alvaro Montano

**School:** Earlimart Middle School, Earlimart

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Wendy Sear

**Statement:**

Alvaro demonstrates the pillar of responsibility on a daily basis. He comes to class prepared and ready to work hard daily. He never gives up no matter how challenging the task.

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**Student Name:** Jaxon Jacobo

**School:** Liberty School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Miranda Evans

**Statement:**

Jaxon has demonstrated exceptional care and compassion inside and outside the classroom setting. His actions consistently reflect a genuine care for the well-being of his peers and creating a positive and supportive atmosphere. Inside of our classroom, Jaxon is known for his willingness to help his classmates, give encouragement and offer assistance whenever it is needed. His positive spirit enhances the overall environment of the classroom, helping create a space that is conducive to learning and fosters a sense of teamwork among his classmates. Outside of the classroom, he goes the extra mile by participating in acts of kindness. Fellow Liberty Lions, students and staff members alike, know Jaxon for providing assistance to those needing help, offering solutions to those facing challenges, and showing genuine care for those around him. His consistent display of care and compassion for others helps enrich our campus and truly merits recognition as an example for others to follow.

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**Student Name:** Fernanda Chavez

**School:** Oak Valley Union School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Citizenship

**Nominator:** Margaret DoCanto

**Statement:**

If there were a million awards to be given out to any one student, I would choose Fernanda again and again. She lights up a room with her smile and personality. She naturally does everything that is expected of her, and she goes above and beyond anytime that it is possible. She never needs to be reminded of the rules. She is trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and without a doubt, a model citizen. She is a leader among her peers, and she will go on to accomplish great things in life because of the positive dynamic that she brings into any and all situations. I'm very fortunate to have her as a student in at least one of my classes for the third year in a row. She is an eighth-grade student and I will be very sad when she leaves at the end of this school year. To say that she is outstanding is a gross understatement!

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**Student Name:** Xzavier Aldana

**School:** Palo Verde Union School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Rose Machado

**Statement:**

Xzavier saved his sister's life! His sister was diagnosed with leukemia after already battling cancer for over three years. A bone marrow transplant was one way to help his sister. He quickly agreed to have his bone marrow tested after his parents explained the procedure, even though he was afraid of needles. Miraculously he was a 100% match with his sister and this summer he underwent surgery to donate his bone marrow. His sister beat leukemia with her brother's help and is recovering at Stanford Children's Hospital. Overall Xzavier is a wonderful young man. He is a jokester who enjoys a good laugh, works hard in his studies and is an athlete. Mature beyond his years, he carries himself like a normal eighth grader after giving so much.

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**Student Name:** Magali Reyes

**School:** Pixley Elementary School, Pixley

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Ana Lucio

**Statement:**

I met Magali at the beginning of her fourth-grade year. I had the honor of being her teacher for the 2022-23 school year. She started out needing small group interventions, especially in writing. She was a little quiet and shy but always came prepared with materials and ready to listen. By the end of the school year, she earned student of the month awards, Pillar of Character awards, and AR awards, just to name a few. By the end of the second trimester, she was a leader among her peers and always offered peer support to those struggling with directions or subject material. I was always so amazed by how much responsibility she took for her own learning. Because of this character trait, Magali grew so much in less than a year that I cannot wait to see her growth in junior high and by the end of her senior year in high school!

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**Student Name:** Jonathan Diarte

**School:** Pixley Middle School, Pixley

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Iris Rodriguez

**Statement:**

Jonathan cares so much! He is always willing to help others with nothing in return. He genuinely wants to see others do well. Not only does Jonathan care for others, but he cares for himself and his education. He always carries himself with such respect and is so empathetic. He is the student who sees others and will check up on them and is always willing to help. He is the student who will not be afraid to take risks in his learning, meaning he will ask questions and answer them even if he is not sure of the answer. Jonathan will try hard because he cares so much about learning, and he always wants to do his best.

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**Student Name:** Jerahmi Flores

**School:** Sundale Union School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Citizenship

**Nominator:** Brittany Grieb

**Statement:**

When I first met Jerahmi, he looked me in the eye, shook my hand, and introduced himself as one of my new seventh grade students. I was extremely impressed with his level of respect. Jerahmi is a student-athlete, and understands the high expectations our school has for student athletes. Once a week, I open up my classroom at lunchtime for any student that wishes to receive extra study help. Jerahmi has not missed one study session. Jerahmi takes responsibility in his learning. He often requests a quiet place to read, raises his hand during lessons, and what inspires me most, is how much he cares about others. He never ceases to lend a helping hand, offer support to myself or a peer, and never makes his peers feel inferior.

Jerahmi has made me very proud and am blessed to be his teacher this school year!



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**Student Name:** Alfredo Martin Gutierrez

**School:** Tipton School, Tipton

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Gina Manfredi

**Statement:**

On a Friday at 3pm after sports and all students have been dismissed, this student really stood out from the rest of his classmates. I was coming in after PE and had dismissed the students, it was hot, and we were all ready to leave. Suddenly I feel a pinch on my arm, I look down to see a bee, it has stung me. I start to panic; I think I yell ouch. Many students and teachers are near me, no one is paying attention, except Alfredo. He comes running up to me and says, "Are you ok?" I responded, "I just got stung." He says, "I can run and get you some ice." He was willing to stop all he is doing and run to the office, instead of heading straight home.

This is not an isolated incident for this student either. The first day of school I noticed Alfredo leaning over after I explained the directions and talked to his elbow partner. I asked what he was doing. He says, "Well, you see she is new and does not speak a lot of English, so I am translating what you are saying to her so that she understands the assignments." He continues to translate for this student and make sure that she is always on task for me.

I have learned that Alfredo is extremely kind and caring. He is always engaged in class and offers help whenever he is needed. As a teacher, I love to have students like Alfredo in class that are such great examples to their classmates. He will continue to excel in life because of his kindness and generous spirit. This is why I am nominating Alfredo Martin Gutierrez for the Pillar of Caring.

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**Student Name:** David Martinez

**School:** Accelerated Charter High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Dana Shook

**Statement:**

David is one of our students that stays for our XL Program after school. On a daily basis, you always see David helping out a student or helping staff with building tables, moving items around or just hanging out with new friends and showing them around campus for the new school year. When things need to be done, we can always count on David, and we all appreciate him very much.

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**Student Name:** Kevin Simiano

**School:** Alice G. Mulcahy Middle School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Marlena Lester

**Statement:**

Kevin Simiano is in our English Language class for students who have been in the United States for two years or less. Kevin is a very kind, responsible young man. He works hard and pushes himself to learn English. He is always asking questions and trying to get involved with things that push him to do better. I met Kevin this year when he asked to participate in my math class to learn more English because he is usually in a self-contained classroom and so that he would be prepared for high school. Kevin takes responsibility for his learning. Kevin is a very responsible young man.

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**Student Name:** Kirsten Crook

**School:** Alpine Vista School 5-8, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Jenna Porchia

**Statement:**

Kirsten is an excellent student and very responsible. She maintains excellent grades, follows directions well, and goes above and beyond to be an active member of her school and community. Kirsten is involved in dance and in the Portuguese community outside of school. Both take a lot of time, yet her schoolwork never takes a back seat. She also has to manage her health, and she does it well. She is responsible and a pleasure to have in class.

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**Student Name:** William Robinson

**School:** Alpine Vista School K-4, Tulare

**Pillar:** Citizenship

**Nominator:** Jordan Doherty

**Statement:**

There are those that are molded into leaders and then there are those who are natural born leaders. William can be described as a natural leader. From the day he stepped foot into the classroom, he has continuously looked for ways to help those around him. He is a special type of leader in that he doesn't help out to receive any type of recognition, he does it because of the intrinsic value. With only a few days into the school year, William has cemented himself into a classroom environment. Other students turn to him when they need assistance. As the teacher, I have been able to count on him to demonstrate classroom routines, procedures, and the carrying out of important tasks. William can consistently be found putting others before himself. If there is someone in need, William will stop what he is doing and go to help them. He is the first student to volunteer and the last to see a task to completion. No matter what he is doing, from classwork, to playing outside, William puts his all into everything. He has internalized the *Leader in Me Habit of Think Win-Win*. When a problem arises, he tries to think of solutions to which he and his friends all benefit. As only a first grader, I know William will continue to strive to be a leader as he grows up. He will leave a positive impact on all those around him.

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**Student Name:** Hallie Irving

**School:** Cherry Avenue Middle School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominators:** Corey Hargis, Rosalynda Mazon, and Angella Chamalbide

**Statement:**

This is my second year having Hallie in my class. She is an excellent student and young lady. She comes to school everyday with her best. Hallie is hardworking and very generous. She is often helping others with their work or checking on students who might be struggling. Everyday she comes in she makes an effort to check on me to see how my family and I are doing. She enjoys reading and encourages others to work hard so they are successful. One of my favorite things about Hallie is that she always says, "Thank you for today" whenever she leaves for the day. Last year when I called Hallie's Mom for a parent conference I asked her if she is just as kind and helpful at home as she is in school. She responded, "Yes. She has always been that way. I don't know how we got so lucky". Hallie is a wonderful kid in and out of the classroom and she deserves recognition for it.

(CARING) Hallie Irving is a model student for really ALL of the pillars, however the most noticeable is the Pillar of Caring.

She greets her teachers everyday with a hello and asks how their day is going. She volunteers to help out with cleaning up art supplies or offers her assistance in the hallways with opening doors or carrying items. When she leaves the classroom, she wishes her teachers to have a great day and thanks them for the lessons they taught her. She is respectful to all her peers and gives words of encouragement on the Volleyball court to her teammates.

Hallie is thoughtful, considering other people's feelings and is understanding with being a good listener to her friends. I have witnessed her on many occasions, just being a GOOD friend and a SUPER helpful student. Not only is she like this at school, but I have had the pleasure to witness it outside of school, caring for her younger sister Abby.

Hallie deserves to be recognized for her exemplary behavior and kindness.

(CARING) Hallie Irving is a Cherry Avenue Bulldog that eats, breathes, and lives the pillar of caring. She has a smile and positive attitude every time she walks in my class. Everyday when she exits my class she says, "Thank you for today!" Hallie is empathetic and offers encouragement to other students at Cherry. She actively goes out of her way to include others in activities. She is respectful of fellow students and school staff. Hallie's caring nature is one of many wonderful things about her.

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**Student Name:** Jersie Rodriguez

**School:** Countryside High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Citizenship

**Nominator:** Cherilyn Austin

**Statement:**

Jersie has demonstrated what it takes to fulfill the CHARACTER COUNTS! Pillar of Citizenship by actively engaging with our leadership class and promoting interaction with all students on campus. She encourages students on campus to get involved with activities.



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**Student Name:** Gustavo Ruiz

**School:** Cypress Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Trustworthiness

**Nominator:** Jenna Davis

**Statement:**

Gustavo is reliable and will always be there to do something when you need him. I don't have to worry about him doing the right thing. He is always honest and presents himself in a way where others can see that they can trust him. I know that I can count on him to do anything I ask.

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**Student Name:** Madeleine Silva Parra

**School:** Frank Kohn Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Michael Langton

**Statement:**

As the Principal of Frank Kohn Elementary, I have witnessed Madeleine Silva embrace the Pillar of Caring in every interaction with fellow students, teachers, site leaders and anyone she comes into contact with. As a member of our school's student leadership team, she is an example for us all. She greets students each morning with a "high-five," or "fist-bump" and a smile. She embraces and lives the school motto of being a CHAMP: Caring, Honest, Ambitious, Making a difference, and Perseverance. Madeleine was the first student to welcome me as I took the principal position at Kohn and continues to greet me with her kind words each day. There is not a day that has passed in which Madeline doesn't ask me how my day is going, seek out ways to assist when needed and wish me and all others in the office a good day as she is leaving. She is an example for others to follow and has the respect from peers and staff alike.

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**Student Name:** Lillian Martin

**School:** Garden Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Cheyenne Crook

**Statement:**

Lillian is a remarkable student who epitomizes the essence of responsibility in her academic journey. With unwavering commitment and dedication, she consistently goes above and beyond to excel in the classroom. Her peers often rely on her dependability, knowing they can count on her to be a valuable team member. Additionally, Lillian's organization skills are truly commendable, maintaining a meticulously structured schedule that enables her to manage assignments and her personal life with ease. She approaches every assignment/activity with the utmost integrity, embracing honesty and ethical standards in all of her endeavors. Her proactive nature is what really sets Lillian apart. She actively seeks opportunities for self-improvement and isn't afraid to take initiative in her academic pursuits. Her effective communication skills ensure that she can articulate her thoughts and collaborate seamlessly with teachers, peers, and classmates. In a world where adaptability is key, Lillian shines as she navigates hard changes and challenges in her personal life, displaying resilience that just completely inspires everyone around her. Lillian is not only a responsible student; she's a role model for responsibility in education and beyond.

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**Student Name:** Nayeli Andrade

**School:** Heritage Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Jillian Hanson

**Statement:**

I'd like to nominate Nayeli for responsibility, although I could have chosen her for any of the pillars. Nayeli is an exceptional student, and a wonderful addition to our school. From the first day of school, Nayeli has demonstrated an exceptional level of dedication to her learning. She finishes her assignments on time, but also approaches each and every task with the determination to learn and do her best. What truly sets her apart is her proactive attitude in seeking clarification when needed. She has the ability to ask thoughtful questions that further her learning, demonstrating her commitment to understanding and completing all of her assignments. Nayeli's dependable nature makes her a perfect role model for her classmates.

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**Student Name:** Rodrigo Jara Mora

**School:** Lincoln Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Anekka Guy

**Statement:**

Rodrigo consistently highlights the Pillar of Responsibility throughout his day. Each morning, he completes his tasks with a careful eye and makes sure he is always using his best penmanship. He takes care of his school supplies and stays organized throughout the day, always prepared for the task we are working on. Rodrigo is a student leader in the classroom, able to assist his tablemates and encourage others to do the right thing. He is kind to those around him and his classmates are eager to work with him and be a part of his group. He treats others the way he would like to be treated and puts away playground equipment when he and his friends are done using it. Many teachers who have interacted with Rodrigo know him to be a role model for others. Rodrigo models responsibility inside and outside of the classroom.

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**Student Name:** Jazlynn Flores

**School:** Live Oak Middle School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Trustworthiness

**Nominator:** Melissa Gonzalez

**Statement:**

Jazlynn Flores for the Character Counts Pillar of Trustworthiness. Jazlynn's unwavering commitment to honesty, integrity, and reliability makes her an exceptional candidate for this esteemed recognition.

Jazlynn embodies the essence of trustworthiness in every aspect of her academic and personal life. Her remarkable ability to be unfailingly polite while remaining completely honest in all situations is truly commendable. Jazlynn has established herself as a beacon of integrity within our school community.

One of Jazlynn's defining characteristics is her commitment to truthfulness. She consistently approaches every interaction with sincerity and transparency, earning the respect and trust of both her peers and educators. Jazlynn's honesty is not just about avoiding falsehoods; it's about always speaking the truth in a considerate and respectful manner.

Furthermore, Jazlynn Flores is known for her steadfastness in upholding her promises. She possesses an incredible sense of responsibility when it comes to fulfilling commitments, whether it be in her academic endeavors, extracurricular activities, or personal relationships. Her classmates and teachers have come to rely on her for her unwavering reliability.

Jazlynn's politeness and honesty create an environment of trust and respect in our school community. She consistently treats others with kindness and courtesy, making her an approachable and approach-worthy individual. Students and staff alike feel comfortable confiding in her, knowing that she will provide honest and thoughtful feedback.

In addition to her commitment to truthfulness and reliability, Jazlynn Flores actively contributes to the betterment of our school community. She serves as a role model for her peers, consistently demonstrating that trustworthiness is a pillar upon which strong relationships and a positive school culture are built.

In conclusion, Jazlynn Flores epitomizes the Pillar of Trustworthiness in its truest sense. Her ability to be polite yet honest in every situation, coupled with her unwavering commitment to upholding promises, sets a remarkable example for all of us at Live Oak. Jazlynn embodies the values we seek to instill in our students.

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**Student Name:** Emiliano Salamanco Murillo

**School:** Los Tules Middle School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Respect

**Nominators:** Karen Vaughn And Aaron Thron

**Statement:**

Emiliano could represent any of the pillars of character. He exemplifies the Pillar of Respect. He is polite and respectful to faculty and peers alike. He is a true leader in his actions and speech. Emiliano is respect personified! - Mrs. Vaughn

Emiliano has a great demeanor to him. He comes in with an open mind to learn new things. He helps others in the class and is willing to be a risk taker in my classroom. Emiliano has been a great asset to my classroom because he is respectful to his table groups and wants to learn and understand more about math. - Mr. Thron



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**Student Name:** Luke Harvey

**School:** Maple Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Ashley Meneses

**Statement:**

I would love to nominate Luke for the Pillar of Responsibility. Not only does he work hard to complete tasks in class, but he has also taken on additional helping roles within our classroom. You can find Luke going above and beyond and following the rules outside at recess, Noon League or other areas of our campus. Luke does most things with a smile on his face, seeking more responsibility. Luke sets a great example for his peers, and I look forward to seeing him grow throughout this year.

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**Student Name:** Alessandra Contreras

**School:** Mission Oak High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator(s):**

Corina Gomes, Marie McPhetridge, and Laurie Jones

**Statement:**

Alessandra has been great working in the counseling office and takes charge without being told.

She's a fast learner, hard worker, and has a great personality, while always having a smile with a positive attitude.

(RESPONSIBILITY)

If I could check each box for Alessandra, I certainly would, as she is and demonstrates each one of these pillars of character!

Alessandra is our Co-op student and works each afternoon in our Counseling office. She comes in right after the student lunch break and works through 4:30 pm with our office staff. Alessandra is TRUSTWORTHY and holds to our confidentiality standards, shows RESPECT to all staff, families, students and outside agencies, is RESPONSIBLE as she performs all of her job duties without having to be reminded or asked to, and takes the initiative to assist anyone coming into our office.

Alessandra's FAIRNESS exudes in her performance, she is CARING and she shows CITIZENSHIP in doing more than her share within our school community

(CARING)

This incredible hawk shows such love in and out of the classroom. They are so nurturing!

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**Student Name:** Sarah Vaughn

**School:** Mission Valley Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Rachel Purkiss

**Statement:**

I have had the pleasure of knowing Sarah Vaughn for the last three years. She is a wonderful and energetic student who is very responsible. Sarah is in our Independent Study program. Sarah has shown responsibility by letting me know of things that are happening and makes sure she works ahead in order to not fall behind in her schoolwork. Sarah is always early to our zoom class and makes sure to check in with me on her work and grades. She attends study halls when needed. Sarah stays on task and completes her work on time. She is such a smart and responsible student!

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**Student Name:** Camila Navejas

**School:** Pleasant Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Helen Richardson

**Statement:**

When Camila's mom asked her if there was anything she would want her new teacher to know about her, Camila responded, "I'm organized, I listen a lot, and I am nice to others." Now that school has started and in a short period of time, Camila has shown herself to be a very sweet and kind kindergartener. It is a joy to have Camila, she makes good choices, follows directions quickly, and I can depend on her to help others.

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**Student Name:** Jose Lara Juarez

**School:** Roosevelt Elementary School Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Tami Rodriguez

**Statement:**

I have known Jose since he was in first grade. During our online instruction, he was there every day with a smile and ready to work. He has had this work ethic all through his school career. Jose is now in the fourth grade, and he is still on time, in his seat, and ready to always do his best. He rarely misses school, and he is always prepared to succeed. If he gets frustrated with something, he tries his best to understand and work through or asks questions until he understands. He is kind to everyone and loves to help other people. In class, he is focused and conscientious. Jose always displays a positive energy and is a great model student.

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**Student Name:** Falicity Shelley

**School:** Tulare Tech Prep High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Caring

**Nominator:** Silvia Sausedo

**Statement:**

Falicity is always willing to help the teacher and her classmates. She would help me clean up the classroom and always ask me if I need any help. If she sees one of her peers needing help with their work, she volunteers to help them.

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**Student Name:** Evelyn Arias

**School:** Tulare Union High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Trustworthiness

**Nominator:** Chandra Benevento

**Statement:**

Evelyn Arias is one of the most trustworthy students I know. She has been a leader in “Intro to Foods and Advanced Foods” over the last two years. I asked her to lead two of the dishes at a major school wide event and not only did she come through for her dishes, she also helped the other student executive chefs with their dishes. She was in my classroom (the kitchen) that whole week in her free time and stayed outside at the event the entire time and even helped on cleanup duty.

On another similar occasion, she was outside (while I had to be inside) helping serve salsas that our students had made. She noticed that something had fallen into one of the salsas and immediately, quietly handled the situation with professionalism and grace without contributing to anyone feeling bad about the situation. I don’t know many people who would have done the same.

I trust Evelyn in so many ways. I trust her judgment, her leadership, her responsibility, her tact, her determination, and her willingness to learn. I’m so proud of her and can’t wait to see what she does in her future!



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**Student Name:** Arena Galeana Oregon

**School:** Tulare Western High School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Responsibility

**Nominator:** Melissa Garcia

**Statement:**

Arena Galeana Oregon is one of the most special students I have ever encountered. Arena is responsible in every sense of the word—she is mature, organized, and a committed student. I'm sure that all of her teachers could attest that she has truly set herself apart both in and out of the classroom.

During her time at TWHS, she has challenged herself academically with multiple advanced courses, in addition to dual-enrollment courses through College of the Sequoias. In the courses she took with me (US History / HIST 17 and 18), she was always fair-minded, receptive to new ideas, and respectful of others. It is deeply important to me in my History classes to discuss multiple perspectives and dive deeper into the simple facts of historical events. Arena was always a considerate contributor to such discussions and demonstrated a clear understanding of complex issues like racism, sexism, classism, and more. I could always count on her to be prepared and engaged in class discussions and was constantly impressed by her nuanced understanding of complex concepts like justice, power, and identity. I also observed that Arena possesses incredible generosity and empathy. She has a gift for understanding others' perspectives, even those far different from her own. She is a hardworking and responsible student with integrity, but equally importantly, she is an exceptionally kind person. I wish I could have an entire class full of students like her.

Since I have known her, Arena and I have also had occasion to discuss her other academic work in the Pre-Medical Academy and her future goal of becoming a doctor and software engineer. I can attest not only to her passion and excitement, but also her seriousness and commitment to her future studies. I cannot wait to see what comes next for her; I am confident that Arena will continue to use her gifts to make this world a better place.

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



**Student Name:** Chris Balderas

**School:** Wilson Elementary School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Respect

**Nominator:** Courtney Dodson

**Statement:**

Chris lives by the "Golden Rule." He really does treat others the way he wants to be treated. He is so kind to anyone he comes into contact with. He plays fair during PE and respects others and himself. He is respectful to subs and other teachers. He respects the school and any property he uses, such as the computers, equipment, and library books. He works well with his group and he is helpful to them if they need anything.

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**Student Name:** Adrian Gutierrez

**School:** Waukena Joint Union School, Tulare

**Pillar:** Fairness

**Nominator:** Christy Dawes-Hansen

**Statement:**

Adrian is being nominated for the character Pillar of Fairness. He is amicable with his classmates from his class as well as the other students on campus. When we engage in P.E. activities, he is helpful and competes with a good attitude. He is quick to help others or share turns during activities, as well.