

**Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2026
Visalia Times Delta 2-Page Ad**



Student Name: Kaylani Alvarez

School: Annie R. Mitchell Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Hannah Mendoza

Statement:

Kaylani is a young lady who truly embodies all six character traits, but the pillar of Respect shines through in everything she does each day. She consistently demonstrates respect not only toward her classmates and teachers, but also toward herself—understanding the true value of hard work and a good education.

I can always count on Kaylani to be doing exactly what is expected of her 100% of the time, a standard of integrity that her peers recognize and admire. She is a shining example of character and a true role model for our school community!

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Student Name: Emma Hernandez

School: Blue Oak Academy, Visalia

Pillar: Fairness

Nominator(s): Mr. Johnson

Statement:

Emma is a wonderful, hardworking student who brightens our classroom every day. She consistently makes an effort to play fair and treat all of those around her with kindness, equity, and respect. Emma's dedication to sportsmanship and inclusion makes her a fantastic role model for her peers. Great job, Emma—you are so deserving of this recognition!

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Student Name: Nichole Cortes

School: Charter Home School, Academy Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Lincy Ramirez

Statement:

From the beginning of the school year, Nichole has consistently demonstrated responsibility, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to her education. As a virtual student, she truly understands the importance of staying on top of her asynchronous assignments while actively participating in live classes. She regularly completes her work on time and takes the initiative to check in with her teacher to ensure nothing is overlooked.

Nichole also demonstrates remarkable responsibility with her attendance. Although enrolled in the afternoon class, she independently joined a Thursday morning session without being asked, adjusting her schedule because her brother attends the in-person program that afternoon. Her proactive mindset, independence, and dedication make her an outstanding role model for virtual learning!

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Student Name: Jay'cion Holliday

School: Conyer Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Lyndsay Gentert

Statement:

Jay'cion is one of the most caring and kind students I have ever had the privilege to teach. During a medical emergency in class, Jay'cion remained remarkably calm and took immediate action to get help for his teacher. In the days that followed, his thoughtful nature truly shone as he continuously checked in—asking if I was resting, making sure I had enough water, and asking how I was feeling.

Throughout the year, Jay'cion consistently encourages his classmates to behave and treat their teachers with kindness. He is a shining example of compassion in action, with a heartfelt care and respect that extends naturally to peers and adults alike. Jay'cion has a rare gift for making those around him feel truly seen, cared for, and valued, making him deeply deserving of this honor!

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Student Name: Makai Sharma

School: Cottonwood Creek Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Mariah Botello

Statement:

Every day, he makes our classroom a kinder, more welcoming place. He consistently checks in on a classmate who needs extra academic support, patiently guiding them through challenges without simply giving away the answers. He extends that same thoughtful assistance to his group and to students throughout the entire room.

He treats classmates and adults alike with genuine kindness and respect, always displaying wonderful manners and deep empathy. By working hard and leading by example, he empowers those around him to feel supported and capable. He is a true model of Character Counts, and I am so grateful to have him in our class!

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Student Name: Bellarose Marquez

School: Creekside Community Day School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Leonardo Castillo

Statement:

Bella merits the distinction for being an exceptionally caring student because she is always looking out for others. She thoughtfully considers how those around her may feel and empathizes with their situations, regardless of how different they might be from her own.

An attentive listener, Bella treats both staff and students with unwavering kindness. Her generosity is remarkable—if she has something to share, she treats it as though it belongs to everyone. She is always the first person in the morning to ask others about their weekend and how their day is going. Bella's bright personality and warm spirit bring light to our entire school community!

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Student Name: Salvador Matthew Salinas

School: Crescent Valley Public Charter School, II Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Danielle Griffiths

Statement:

Matthew is hardworking, honest, compassionate, and truly kind. He consistently demonstrates exceptional courage and resilience in the face of adversity—character traits that will undoubtedly serve him and his community well into the future. It is an absolute privilege to watch him grow, and I cannot wait to see all that he accomplishes next. Congratulations, Matthew! This recognition is well deserved!

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Student Name: Ezekiel Lovci

School: Crestwood Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Kasey Nip

Statement:

Ezekiel began his TK year learning the structure and routines of life as a student, and his growth since then has been truly extraordinary. Over the course of the school year, he has developed remarkable leadership skills and stepped up as a wonderful role model in the classroom. Ezekiel is always eager to lend a helping hand to his teacher and support his peers. His journey and positive influence make him an outstanding candidate for this Character Counts recognition!

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Student Name: Aubree Lopez

School: Crowley Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Ricardo Gil

Statement:

Aubree exemplifies Trustworthiness through her steadfast honesty and dependability. Teachers and classmates know they can rely on her completely, whether she is entrusted with important classroom responsibilities or delivering materials to school staff.

In class, Aubree is always on task, engaged, and ready for the next assignment. She actively participates in discussions and often helps clarify concepts for students who are struggling. Without being asked by a teacher, she gladly steps up to assist her peers with their tasks—showing an unwavering commitment to doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Aubree is a stellar example of character in action!

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Student Name: Milo Garza

School: Denton Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Megan Garza

Statement:

Milo possesses a naturally caring and thoughtful heart. Even at just five years old, he pays close attention to how others are feeling and goes out of his way to ensure no one feels sad or left out. He notices and values kindness in others, often describing school friends simply as “the nicest kid,” showing a remarkable early appreciation for how people treat one another.

Milo’s compassion shines in everything he does. At the golf course, he thoughtfully offers extra buckets of golf balls to other children so they do not go to waste. He asks to pray before dinner and regularly checks to see if those around him are doing okay. While these may seem like small moments, together they reveal a child of extraordinary character—kind, generous, and deeply attentive to the well-being of others. Milo has a very big heart for such a young boy, and he is a truly deserving nominee for this recognition!

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Student Name: Kyaunah Le

School: Divisadero Middle School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Juniva Bojorquez

Statement:

Kyaunah Le is an exceptional student who consistently demonstrates outstanding academic performance, currently holding one of the highest grades in class. She is highly attentive, remains diligently on task, and frequently enriches our learning environment by actively contributing to class discussions. Additionally, her readiness to assist her peers makes her a true asset to our school and an absolute pleasure to have in class!

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Student Name: Emilia Romero

School: El Diamante High School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Jessica Cervantes

Statement:

Having the opportunity to coach Emilia Romero has allowed me to see the remarkable person she is both on and off the basketball court. Emilia is someone I know I can trust and depend on completely—whether in the heat of a game, during practice, or as a supportive teammate. She is honest, responsible, and possesses the maturity to hold herself accountable even when it is not easy.

What I appreciate most about Emilia is the deep trust she inspires in those around her. Her teammates know they can rely on her because she leads through her actions, keeps her word, and consistently puts what is right for the team first. Having a player who represents our program with such unwavering integrity is truly special, and Emilia is immensely deserving of this honor!

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Student Name: Luke Jackson

School: Eleanor Roosevelt Community
Learning Center, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Lindsay Rose

Statement:

Luke is an incredibly caring and helpful presence in my 3rd-grade Math Enrichment class at ERCLC. Serving as a 6th-grade student volunteer, Luke consistently demonstrates remarkable patience and kindness when guiding younger students, particularly those who require extra support. He willingly works one-on-one with them, offering warm encouragement and helping them grasp math concepts without ever making them feel rushed.

Luke proactively jumps into our math games and activities with minimal direction, always eager to lend a hand wherever he is needed. His kindness, consideration, and genuine willingness to serve others make a profound difference for my students while helping our classroom run seamlessly. Luke is a true role model and a wonderful reflection of the pillar of Caring!

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Student Name: Keira Mariana Montelongo Vences

School: Four Creeks Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Jessica Lopez

Statement:

Mariana is an absolute star, possessing a quiet kindness that leaves a powerful and lasting impact on those around her. I have watched Mariana consistently welcome my students with warmth, positivity, and complete respect.

During think-pair-share activities, she engages effortlessly—remaining patient and encouraging even when a student may be distracted. She celebrates their small wins, praises their efforts, and includes them as equal members of the class. Through her leadership, Mariana sets a high standard: she is always on task, ready to work, and eager to help. By demonstrating such genuine acceptance, she has inspired her classmates to welcome my students without hesitation. Mariana is a true leader in Mrs. Ariana Diaz's classroom and a shining example of character in action!

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Student Name: Emerie Lara

School: Golden Oak Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): HenryAllen Ralston

Statement:

Emerie is the absolute heart of our classroom when it comes to integrity, embodying what it means to be trustworthy every single day. For Emerie, trustworthiness isn't something she turns on and off—it is simply who she is. She is genuinely honest, dependable, and true to her word in everything she does. Whether working independently, collaborating with a partner, or moving around campus, I never have to worry about Emerie; I know without a doubt that she will choose to do the right thing, even when no one is watching.

What makes Emerie truly stand out is how much her classmates rely on her. In group work, she is the partner everyone wants because she always pulls her weight, listens carefully, and keeps her promises. Beyond academics, Emerie is a safe harbor for her peers—she keeps confidence, speaks kindly of others, and stands up for her classmates, earning their complete trust through her fairness, respect, and constant kindness.

As her teacher, Emerie is the student I can hand any important task to, knowing it will be handled with absolute care and honesty. If something ever goes wrong, she possesses the courage and maturity to speak the truth right away—a level of character that is rare and wonderful to see in a third grader. Emerie makes our classroom community stronger, safer, and kinder just by being in it, modeling true trustworthiness through her quiet strength and loyalty. I couldn't be prouder of her, and she is beyond deserving of the Character Counts Award for Trustworthiness!

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Student Name: Felix Ortega

School: Golden West High School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Joy Rubio

Statement:

Felix's character and personality naturally draw people to him—he is truly a bright light on the Golden West campus. Recently, when I needed support with an underclassman who felt disconnected from our school and student body, Felix stepped up without hesitation to make them feel welcomed and valued as part of something bigger.

Even adults on campus recognize his positive impact based on the wonderful things students share about him, which speaks volumes about the depth of his character. Felix actively inspires and empowers underclassmen to build their own leadership skills to make Golden West a better place for everyone. He is a true Trailblazer and a shining example of character in action!

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Student Name: Jacob Ibarra Orozco

School: Goshen Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Celeste Garcia

Statement:

Jacob is an amazing leader both inside and outside the classroom, consistently demonstrating Responsibility and initiative by stepping up to help without ever being asked. He anticipates what needs to be done and can always be counted on to set a positive, respectful example for those around him.

Whether leading his table group, participating in discussions, assisting a classmate, or helping me, Jacob approaches every task with an eager and positive attitude. His leadership comes naturally—he does the right thing simply because of who he is, never for recognition. His classmates look to him as a trusted role model because he is dependable, respectful, and always willing to do his part. Jacob makes our classroom a better place every day, and I am incredibly proud to nominate him for the Kids of Character Award!

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Student Name: Jayden Lujan

School: Grace Christian School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Joanne Cook

Statement:

I am pleased to nominate Jayden for the pillar of Caring in recognition of his genuine willingness to help others and his outstanding leadership. Jayden serves as a wonderful example to younger students—regularly helping clean up after lunch, assisting peers with technology, including students of all ages in recess soccer games, and treating everyone with utmost respect.

Teachers can always count on Jayden to step up and lend a helping hand whenever needed. His vibrant, positive attitude permeates our entire campus, and it is clear that his peers look up to him as a role model. We are so proud of Jayden and cannot wait to see all that he accomplishes this year and in the future!

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Student Name: Valentina Maldonado Sanchez

School: Highland Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Jaiden Davis

Statement:

Valentina truly deserves to be recognized because she is kind to everyone! She is always the first person to step up and play with a friend or partner up with a classmate who needs support.

Valentina models Respect every day at school, setting a wonderful example for her peers on how to treat others with warmth and consideration. She is an absolute joy to have in our school community, and her positive heart makes her a wonderful role model for all!

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Student Name: Juan Rojas

School: Houston Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Marsela Diaz

Statement:

Juan is a caring and compassionate student who has come so far, and he truly deserves to be recognized and celebrated for the incredible growth he has shown. He consistently demonstrates kindness toward others and serves as a thoughtful, supportive friend to his classmates.

Juan's positive progress, caring heart, and steadfast commitment to being his best make him a shining example of character and a student who is truly deserving of this award!

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Student Name: Antonia Mikhael

School: Hurley Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Andre Navarrette II

Statement:

Antonia models Responsibility at Hurley Elementary by taking full ownership of her learning and consistently striving for academic excellence. She takes immense pride in her work, embraces new challenges, and inspires those around her through her dedication. As a collaborative leader, she thoughtfully guides group discussions and supports her classmates with utmost respect and kindness.

Beyond the classroom, Antonia shows exceptional leadership in both Science Olympiad and Orchestra. Her humility, warmth, and supportive nature make her universally loved and admired by her peers. Antonia is a shining example of character in action and truly deserving of this recognition!

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Student Name: Giovanni Martinez Ramirez

School: La Sierra Military Academy Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Gabrel Castro

Statement:

Since day one, this student has gone above and beyond to demonstrate what it means to care for others and his school community. He is responsible, respectful, kind, and always eager to lend a hand. Whether participating in school activities, volunteering at county events, or regularly checking in with staff to see how else he can support, his dedication to serving others is remarkable.

He treats both peers and adults with genuine respect and consistently goes out of his way to help new students feel welcomed on campus. In the classroom, he takes great pride in his academics, asks for guidance when needed, and continually seeks opportunities to grow. His caring spirit, humility, and willingness to serve make him a stellar representative of Character Counts!

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Student Name: Anora Ford

School: Linwood Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Lisa Kruger

Statement:

Anora truly has a heart of gold! She is always the first person to offer a reassuring hug to a classmate who is upset, or step up to help a peer who is hurt or feeling unwell. Since a very young age, Anora has been a steadfast source of comfort for a fellow student navigating anxiety, willingly stepping in as a partner to help them through challenging moments. She does all of this completely on her own initiative—being a compassionate caretaker is simply second nature to her.

Beyond her actions, Anora brings a deep, sincere empathy to her everyday interactions. When she asks someone, "How are you doing?" or "How is your day going?", she pauses and listens intently because she truly cares about the answer. Anora is a wonderful example of the pillar of Caring, and our school community is so fortunate to have such a thoughtful, kind-hearted student!

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Student Name: Isaac Sanchez-Chavez

School: Manuel F. Hernandez Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Raquel Renteria

Statement:

Isaac brings a contagious energy that models Respect in action, voice, and learning. Simple words like "thank you" and "may I" highlight his everyday manners, while his active engagement with peers and classroom routines shows just how deeply he values our learning environment.

In everything he does, Isaac brings a welcoming smile and a positive attitude. He is a delight to know and a true inspiration for our school community. Go, Isaac!

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Student Name: Bella Garcia

School: Mineral King Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Rob Loer

Statement:

Bella is an amazing student who consistently exceeds expectations both academically and in her overall character. The moment she finishes her own assignments, she immediately steps up to help her peers understand their work—she is truly like having a mini-teacher in the room!

Bella is always remarkably respectful, follows all classroom rules, and serves as a stellar model for others on how to behave. She takes full ownership of her learning by completing all classwork and homework, often going above and beyond what is assigned. Kind, hardworking, and a friend to everyone, Bella Garcia is an absolute pleasure to have in class and could not be more deserving of this Character Counts recognition!

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Student Name: Avery Stueve

School: Mountain View Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Erika Headrick

Statement:

From Day 1 of second grade, Avery Stueve has consistently demonstrated what it means to be a model of Responsibility. She always does what is expected and serves as a fantastic role model for her peers.

At Mountain View, we show Mustang P.R.I.D.E. even when things get tough, Avery shows incredible determination, staying focused and making good choices even when others around her may struggle to follow the rules. It takes real courage to do what is right simply because it is right every single day. Thank you, Avery, for being such a responsible second grader and setting such a wonderful example!

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Student Name: Kaisley Akin

School: Oak Grove Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Paula Sbardella

Statement:

Kaisley is an extraordinary example of caring. Since the beginning of the school year, she has shown remarkable compassion toward another classmate with special needs. Every day, she greets him warmly, encourages him, praises his good choices, helps him with his lunch and snacks, and ensures he gets where he needs to go safely. At recess, she plays with him and patiently encourages him to join in with others.

No one asks Kaisley to do these things—her kindness comes naturally. Her genuine empathy, patience, and compassion are remarkable for a second grader, and she serves as a beautiful example of how one child's kindness can make a profound and meaningful difference in another's life!

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Student Name: Alaia Rodriguez Sandoval

School: Pinkham Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Tina Garner

Statement:

Alaia is a wonderful example of Respect in our first-grade classroom. She consistently shows kindness and consideration to everyone around her by using whole-body listening whenever a teacher or classmate is speaking. Alaia demonstrates polite manners every day, always remembering to say "please" and "thank you," and is quick to include others during recess and group activities. Her positive attitude and ability to value everyone's differences make her a fantastic friend and a joyful, respectful leader in our school community!

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Student Name: Javier Leon Velazquez

School: Redwood High School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Angelica Jauregui

Statement:

Throughout his time at Redwood High School, Javier has consistently treated everyone around him with genuine kindness and respect. He listens attentively, speaks thoughtfully, and never hesitates to offer encouragement to those who need it.

Whether welcoming a new student, supporting a classmate having a tough day, or simply holding the door and greeting people by name, Javier's respectful nature shines through in everyday moments. He leads by quiet example rather than seeking attention—showing that true respect means valuing others' feelings and treating people the way he himself would like to be treated. Javier is a true role model and deeply deserving of this recognition.

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Student Name: Zoey Arreola

School: Ridgeview Middle School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Justine Monroe

Statement:

Zoey is one of the most trustworthy students I have ever had the privilege of teaching. Her honesty, integrity, and strong character shine through in everything she does. As Student Council President, she easily earned the trust and respect of both her teachers and peers through her dependability, responsibility, and consistent follow-through on every commitment.

Zoey holds herself to high standards and repeatedly makes choices that reflect her strong personal values. Her quiet strength, sincerity, and genuine care for others make her someone everyone can count on—a true role model whose positive attitude and bright smile light up any room.

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Student Name: Annabelle Gonzalez

School: Riverway Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Kristen Brown

Statement:

Annabelle truly represents what it means to be caring. She possesses an incredible heart for others and is always seeking ways to uplift those around her. What makes her stand out is her initiative—she never waits to be asked. The moment she notices someone in need of help, encouragement, or support, she quietly steps in without hesitation.

Annabelle generously gives her time and attention, consistently putting the needs of others before her own. Her kindness is genuine, selfless, and constant. She is the kind of student who makes everyone around her feel valued and cared for, and our classroom is a better place because of her.

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Student Name: Ellie Camacho

School: Royal Oaks Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator(s): Ray Cartagena

Statement:

Ellie has served in Student Leadership for two years and has continuously excelled in this role. Having her as a student this year, I see her leadership skills in action every single day. She has a natural gift for making everyone around her feel welcome, often bringing smiles to her peers with her signature "dad jokes."

Recognizing her exceptional character, Ellie was nominated to represent Royal Oaks as a district-level student representative on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee. She is remarkably responsible with her academics—never missing an assignment and ensuring that any work not completed at school is diligently finished at home. Ellie is a fine example of good citizenship and a fantastic role model for our class and our entire school.

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Student Name: Berkley Towne

School: Sequoia High School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Salud Cobarruvias

Statement:

Berkley, a senior at Sequoia High School, truly defines the pillar of Responsibility. As a standout leader in ASB, she assists teachers with managing the campus school store during break and lunch—mastering budgeting, customer service, and time management skills.

Her exceptional reliability earned her the role of weekly bulletin reader, and she consistently drives campus engagement by structuring monthly themes and crafting school-wide announcements. Polite, respectful, and deeply dedicated, Berkley maintains a strong 3.47 GPA and leads by example every single day.

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Student Name: Autumn Williams

School: Shannon Ranch Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Monica Pasquini

Statement:

Autumn is not only an outstanding scholar, but she is also a model of honesty and trustworthiness. When she found two SPURS tickets on the floor, she immediately chose to do the right thing and turned them in rather than keeping them for herself.

Her integrity and strong character were so impressive that I decided she had truly earned the right to keep the tickets. Autumn is a positive, dependable student who consistently makes great choices and serves as a wonderful example for her classmates. I am so proud of the scholar she is!

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Student Name: Ezequiel Reyes

School: Sierra View Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator(s): Laura Mohs

Statement:

Ezequiel “E.Z” as we call him, is one of the most responsible students I have ever taught. He navigates a medical condition with a level of maturity and responsibility that is well beyond his years—knowing exactly when he can manage things independently and precisely when to ask for assistance.

Through it all, E.Z. maintains a positive attitude and handles every situation with a warm smile on his face. His resilience, self-advocacy, and bright spirit make him a joy to have in class and an incredible role model for our school community.

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Student Name: Jackson Wileman

School: St. Paul's School, Visalia

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator(s): Malia Matsuo

Statement:

Jackson has been a model student throughout his time at St. Paul's School. He is a welcoming friend to new students, consistently strives for excellence in academics, sports, and extracurriculars, and even organized a school-wide collection to recycle old and worn-out crayons.

In my robotics elective, Jackson proved himself as a standout leader, guiding his team all the way to the regional competition. He consistently goes above and beyond to represent his school, family, and self with pride and positivity. Jackson is a deeply caring and responsible member of our community, making him truly deserving of this recognition.

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Student Name: JR Zaragoza

School: Stone Corral School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Dolores Gonzalez

Statement:

JR Zaragoza is a remarkably respectful student who consistently upholds our school's expectations. During lunchtime, he waits patiently to be dismissed from the cafeteria and follows directions with ease.

He plays fairly with his peers, shows genuine respect toward classmates and adults alike, and responds wonderfully to guidance. JR is also deeply involved in sports, where he shines by demonstrating outstanding sportsmanship, fairness, and teamwork. His positive attitude and respectful nature make him a wonderful role model for our school community.

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Student Name: Cadence Brooks

School: Sycamore Valley Academy, Visalia

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator(s): Dave Whitmore

Statement:

Cadence goes out of her way every morning to ensure that all students on Sycamore Valley Academy's campus feel cared for and supported. She actively seeks out new students to make them feel welcome, gently helps TK students walk to their classrooms when they are feeling scared, and makes a point to be a comforting friend to anyone who arrives on campus looking sad. Cadence truly embodies what it means to be a Sycamore Valley student, and her compassionate leadership makes our entire school community a better place!

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Student Name: Charles Deniston-Sheets

School: University Preparatory High School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Josh Curtiss

Statement:

Charles demonstrated exceptional character and courage when he witnessed a classmate being spoken to with unkind words. Rather than remaining a passive bystander, Charles immediately stepped in to advocate for his peer, telling the offender, *"Hey friend, that is not the way we talk to our friends."* By standing up for others and promoting kindness in our school community, Charles serves as an inspiring example of courage, citizenship, and respect.

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Student Name: Lennox Clark

School: Valley Life Charter School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Leticia Sullivant

Statement:

Lennox exemplifies true Trustworthiness. We can always depend on her to be honest and keep her word, no matter the situation. For example, when our class has a substitute teacher, Lennox can be trusted to explain classroom procedures and rules clearly so her peers stay accountable and keep the day running smoothly.

When misunderstandings arise among friends, Lennox helps resolve conflict not by taking sides, but by being an honest, neutral voice of truth. She faithfully honors her commitments and lives out our class mission statement every single day. I am pleased and privileged to nominate Lennox for trustworthiness—she thoroughly deserves this honor!

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CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2026
Visalia Times Delta 2-Page Ad**



Student Name: Lily Carter

School: Valley Oak Middle School, Visalia

Pillar: Respect

Nominator(s): Claudia Navarro

Statement:

I would like to honor Lily Carter for consistently demonstrating respect and genuine acceptance toward everyone. Although quiet, Lily treats others with deep dignity and actively ensures that everyone feels welcome and included.

What makes Lily especially deserving of this recognition is the remarkable ability to look beyond differences and appreciate each person for who they are. Lily's positive attitude and authentic acceptance help create a warm, inclusive environment for all, making an outstanding example of respect and kindness in our school community.

Tulare County Office of Education
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Student Name: Landon Einsele

School: Veva Blunt Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator(s): Holli Elliott

Statement:

I am pleased to nominate Landon Einsele for the Character Counts Award in Trustworthiness. Landon consistently demonstrates honesty and integrity through his actions and decisions. He makes responsible choices, stands up for what is right, and sets a positive example for his classmates.

Landon's commitment to doing the right thing makes him a student others can depend on and look to as a true role model. As his teacher, I am especially proud of the courage he shows in standing up for what is right. His strong character, steadfast honesty, and everyday integrity make him someone everyone can trust, leaving a deeply meaningful impact on our entire classroom community.

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Student Name: Carter Meza

School: Washington Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominator(s): Elizabeth McKercher

Statement:

This student is a great student all around—always sharing, friendly, responsible, and consistently looking for ways to help others.

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Student Name: Mila Salazar

School: Willow Glen Elementary School, Visalia

Pillar: Caring

Nominator(s): Kathia Mora

Statement:

Mila consistently demonstrates the Character Counts pillar of Caring through her unwavering kindness, generosity, and deep respect for others. She is always eager to lend a helping hand, offer words of encouragement, and genuinely look out for everyone in her classroom community.

Mila approaches her education with equal dedication—taking great pride in her learning, striving to complete her work accurately, and always giving her absolute best effort. She willingly steps up to volunteer and lead, naturally serving as a role model through her daily choices and humble example. Mila's kind heart, thoughtful nature, and generous spirit make her an outstanding model of what it truly means to care for others.