

Tulare County Office of Education
CHARACTER COUNTS! Week 2022
Visalia Times Delta 2-Page Ad



Student Name: Renata Bermejo

School: Cutler Elementary School, Custer

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Irma Ramirez

Statement:

Renata is kind to all students and staff and always has a smile for everyone. She is quick to help students in class. If a student is stuck answering a question she motions where they can find the answer or whispers to help them. When working with a group she first likes to allow classmates to lead before offering her suggestions. Renata never acts like she is better than others. She is also willing to help any staff that require help outside and inside the classroom. She is one of the first to offer help. Renata also acts to comfort a classmate when they are feeling down. I have not seen one negative expression in her face or a negative comment from her.

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Student Name: Aaron Gibson

School: Dinuba Community Based Instruction, Dinuba

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Randall Steen

Statement:

Aaron Gibson is a student in my class who exhibits trustworthiness daily. Aaron always tells the truth, even when it doesn't benefit him. Aaron shows up to school ready to learn, and always keeps his pledge to give his best as a class citizen. I can always rely on Aaron for the truth. Aaron is a trustworthy student who will be honest in his answers.

Aaron is a pleasure to have in class, and is a model for trustworthiness to his class peers. His attitude and character are something I look forward to daily when I come into work.

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Student Name: David Camarillo
School: Dinuba High School, Dinuba

Pillar: Citizenship

Nominators: TJ Celaya and
Tonya Pennebaker

Statement:

A current Dinuba High School senior who exemplifies upstanding citizenship within our community is David Camarillo. David's empathetic commitment to his community: He has helped start a campaign in our community to help homeless families each year. He has worked with local organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to volunteer serving in various community events. David has also led groups of student volunteers to partner with a local church that is dedicated to serving free meals on holidays and distributing toys to children during Christmas break. He has always been the leading contact with such organizations as he is reliable, kind, humble, outgoing and always wanting to serve in any capacity. While David continues to actively serve the DHS student body with his many active roles as officers for these clubs, it is his commitment to his community through his volunteer service that sets him apart from his peers.

David's leadership in our NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) club throughout his tenure at DHS allowed him to step out and serve his community in a multitude of ways. He was responsible for helping to start a campaign to raise funds and gather other students to work alongside him to purchase and create items for care packages for the homeless community in our town. Inspired by compassion, David was able to reach out to a local non-profit organization called Open Gate which houses individuals and families that are less fortunate and temporarily homeless. David has led efforts to help break the stigma of mental illness by assisting in decorating our football stadium with the color green to raise awareness during mental health month and suicide prevention month.

There are few, if any students that you will find as intelligent, hardworking, and determined as David. He is a responsible, caring, student and does everything with excellence.

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Student Name: *Khaelynn Melchor*

School: Grand View Elementary School,
Dinuba

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Rafael Cisneros

Statement:

I met Khaelynn three years ago when I was her older sister's teacher. Khaelynn shows up to school everyday with a positive attitude and a big welcoming smile. She is always willing to help anyone in need both in the classroom or around the campus. She has much compassion for her classmates. I had a new student last week that was nervous about her first day. Khaelynn showed her around campus and made sure that the new student had someone to play with at recess. She also does a great job of using her words to build up her peers. Khaelynn complements her peers on things she notices that usually go unnoticed by most. Khaelynn is one of the most caring students I have had in my classroom, and I am honored to be her teacher this year.

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Student Name: Ruby Gutierrez

School: Jefferson Elementary School,
Dinuba

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Martha Sawatzky

Statement:

Ruby displays the Pillar of Caring (and responsibility, as well). She asked me early in the year if she could come help me in the morning before school, and she has come almost every single day. She sets chairs down from on top of the desks, sets up the computers and their headphones, and passes out papers or anything else that needs to be done. Then, once class begins, she gets right to work, finishing her reading assignments quickly and begins to help other students. She remembers her individual personal library time and makes sure she is prepared to go at the correct time, without ever being reminded. One Friday, when I had the students eat lunch with me in my classroom as a reward for doing their homework, two students each sat down near a bigger group of girls. I invited the girls to join the larger group, and Ruby was the first to say, "Yes, come join us. Come sit right here, next to me!" Each girl hesitated as they were trying to decide if they would, and Ruby's friendly smile seemed to be just what they needed to feel wanted and included! Ruby well deserves recognition for her caring, helpful ways.

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Student Name: Emma Rodriguez

School: Lincoln Elementary School,
Dinuba

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Tina Faulkner

Statement:

Emma exemplifies the Pillar of Respect. She shows respect for both her peers and to the adults in her life. She always listens to other people's perspectives and is able to respectfully disagree. Emma is a super sweet girl with a tremendous heart. I am thrilled to be able to nominate her for 2022 Kids of Character.

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Student Name: Vivian Rodriguez
School: Ronald Reagan Academy, Dinuba

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Terry McReynolds

Statement:

Vivian Rodriguez demonstrates responsibility by using all of her time in class to actively engage in ELA 11 learning modules. She advances quickly by dedicating time after school to recover credits on Edgenuity. Even though she struggled to stay on track during some hard times, she continues to surprise me by completing all her assignments with an average grade of "B+". After completing her assignments, she respectfully requests more work to complete. She is a hard - working student who takes responsibility seriously. She has a plan to attend college after graduating high school.

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Student Name: Abraham Moreno

School: Roosevelt Elementary School,
Dinuba

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Lynn Hampton

Statement:

Abraham is a very sweet boy. He cares about all of his friends. We have a student with special needs in our class who likes to touch people. Abraham never complains, even when the other student is climbing on him.

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Student Name: Kimberly Reyes

School: Wilson Elementary School,
Dinuba

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Aileen Galvan

Statement:

Kimberly has demonstrated several ways on how she is caring. She is extremely helpful to those around her and will offer to help in any way that she can. When I started off the year as a first year teacher, Kimberly stepped up to help me in any way that she could, such as answering any questions I had about the way certain things were done in the school. During her recess, Kimberly offers to help pick up trash because she wants to make sure her school looks nice. As a bilingual speaker, she offers to help and translate for her Spanish speaking classmate.

Kimberly is the perfect example of what a caring student looks like. I am extremely lucky and proud to have someone as caring as Kimberly in my classroom!

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Student Name: Benjermen Gomez
School: Ivanhoe Elementary School,
Ivanhoe

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Osiel Garcia Cervantes

Statement:

Benjermen is one of the most caring individuals I have come across. He is very approachable and willing to help others in need no matter their circumstances. He is a role model for other students on campus. Everyday Benjermen shows up to school with a smile and high optimism. His love and dedication for learning have earned him our first 8th - grade student of the month. Benjermen exemplifies our acronym P.O.W.E.R. at our school. He always has a positive attitude, takes ownership of his actions, makes wise choices, is educationally focused, and respects all of those around him. He is a future leader. It's a true honor to have Benjermen with us this year.

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Student Name: Vincent Cacace

School: Kings River Union School,
Kingsburg

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Sarah Humason

Statement:

Vincent is cognizant and caring of those around him, whether they're friends or unfamiliar to him. He goes out of his way to be kind or attempt to include others that he's noticed may need some friendly words or to be shown they are welcome and important. Vincent also volunteers as needed to assist adult staff. Without a request or prompting, Vincent has demonstrated his caring attitude towards all and always unconditionally. He notices when help is needed, whether it be with an academic or extra-curricular activity, and will immediately share his knowledge and skills to help peers feel successful. Vincent is also known to be kind with nature and animals, and takes responsibility to care for animals and humans whenever he can. Vincent radiates a caring attitude each day and is a wonderful role model for all other students. He is most definitely a helpful, kind, and generous young man.

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Student Name: Keyana Gonzalez

School: El Monte Middle School,
Orosi

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Jose Montemayor

Statement:

I had a difficult time narrowing down which pillar best described this student because she truly embodies each of these traits. Keyana is trustworthy, respectful, fair and kind. She participates in food drives and takes part in her community to make it a better place. However, I chose the trait that you do not often see in students at this age, which is responsibility.

Keyana embodies the pillar of responsibility at its highest level. She truly believes that it is her responsibility to be the best possible version of herself no matter the task. For example, the students had an assignment, which involved an essay on the history of Jamestown. When Keyana wrote her essay, she had a request for me. She asked me, "Mr. Montemayor, can you make sure that when you check my essay you hold me accountable? If you see any areas that can be improved or if I made any mistakes please let me know what they are. I want to be challenged, I want to be pushed. I want to excel." She wanted the criticisms, to have all the errors noted and to know where she could improve. Students usually are discouraged by the infamous red pen but Keyana is inspired by it.

Every student that is around her benefits from her. In other words, Keyana is not happy with just challenging herself but also the students around her, and they enjoy it. They all want to sit with her because they feel that they are better learners when they do. She inspires them to be more.

She exemplifies each and every character trait on this list because of her awe-inspiring need to do the right thing at all times.

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Student Name: Michelle Flores

School: Golden Valley Elementary
School, Oroshi

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Megan Thiessen

Statement:

Michelle Flores is a student of character, from the moment she walks into the classroom until she walks out at the end of the day. Michelle is being nominated for the Pillar of Caring. So far this year, we have had two new students and Michelle was one of the first students to welcome them to our classroom, give them a tour at recess time, and answer any questions they had. She has taken time out of her day, when she has completed her own assignments, to sit down and help these two students. Anytime we have a need, she is the first one to raise her hand or volunteer. Having a student like Michelle is like having a glass of cold water on a hot day. Her presence in the classroom is refreshing and everyone appreciates her.

I feel honored to have her in the classroom because she has been recognized by other teachers she comes into contact with for her caring nature. She naturally wants to support others when they don't understand. One student Michelle has gravitated toward is a newcomer to our school who only speaks Arabic. Even though there is a language barrier, she has been extremely helpful in using nonverbal cues in music and modeling how to complete tasks in our STEM program.

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Student Name: Nazareth Zavala

School: Palm Elementary School,
Orosi

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Tamara Berry

Statement:

Nazareth is a student who exemplifies all of the Six Pillars. She has God at the wheel of her education. She exuberates love, kindness, caring, respect, trustworthiness, and responsibility. She is patient and motivated to do her best. If she doesn't understand a concept in class, she will seek out information on her own. She supports her peers in a kind way. She literally could run our class. She always uses kind words. I have never seen her get upset or frustrated. She loves to come to school and do her best ,to make her parents proud.

I started the year out pretty bumpy, with the loss and hospitalization of family members. Nazareth always greets me with a hug and asks how I am doing. She has insight into the feelings of others even if they don't show it. One day she brought me a scripture Romans 15:13 that stated "Give joy to my teacher and brighten her day". This act of kindness continued and it has brought me great happiness. What a beautiful child. I am so blessed to have her as my student. She is going to make a huge difference in this world.

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Student Name: Jimena Ortiz

School: Monson-Sultana Joint Union
School, Sultana

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Carmen Arellano

Statement:

Jimena Ortiz has been showing responsible character. She has been absent a few times and every single time she has sent her older sibling to my classroom to turn in her homework or to pick up new homework. She is committed to her learning and doesn't use absences as an excuse to not do her homework. She's a student of responsible character.

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Student Name: True Bennett

School: Three Rivers Union Elementary
School, Three Rivers

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Liz Harrelson

Statement:

True is an exceptional friend. During carpet time, she always raises her hand and has thoughtful comments to share about our discussions. During disagreements, she uses her big words to talk through troubling situations. On the playground, she looks out for the safety of herself and others. True sets a great example of caring and compassion in our TK/Kindergarten classroom.

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Student Name: Daniel Rojas
School: Traver Joint School, Traver

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: Linda Navarro

Statement:

Daniel Rojas always has a smile on his face and will help out with any task during or after school. He is just an all around good student.

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Student Name: Luke Hopper

School: Elbow Creek Elementary School,
Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Shay Williams-Hopper

Statement:

Luke has taken on the responsibility of caring for our pets at home on a daily basis. He is responsible for feeding our dog, cats, rabbit, and goats. He rarely has to be asked to go out and take care of his chores, he knows when they need to be fed and stays on top of it. He also is really cautious, making sure that their food and water bowls are clean each day. Luke is also very quick to come home from school and get started on his homework to get it completed without a fight. He has learned that if he gets his work done right after school, he has more time for activities he likes to do like wrestling.

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Student Name: Delanny Flores
School: Stone Corral School, Visalia

Pillar: Trustworthiness

Nominator: Susana Haro

Statement:

Delanny Flores is a student who exemplifies being trustworthy. She has shown on multiple occasions that she can be depended upon, relied upon and stay committed to her word. This year she did an act of good conscience which supports exactly why she is someone who is TRUE BLUE. Delanny one day happened to have lost money on the playground and was frantically asking around if anybody had picked it up, but no one turned anything in. A few days go by and Delanny steps in my office and says "Miss. Haro, I found money out in the playground and unlike the person who never returned my money I am doing the right thing and not keeping what is not mine." I praised her for her integrity, honesty, and courage for doing the right thing when no one was looking.

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Student Name: Olivia Vargas

School: Willow Glen Elementary School,
Visalia

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Ray Cartagena

Statement:

Olivia Vargas has been in Leadership for 2 years. I have had the privilege of being her adviser. She attends every meeting and workday. She even comes and does work on non-meeting/work days. Whatever she is responsible for, you can be sure it will be of the highest quality. She is always striving to include everyone. This is demonstrated with her "Hellos" to Staff, her fellow classmates (regardless of grade), and even visitors on our campus. When it looks like someone needs help, she is always there to lend a helping hand. Olivia is also in our HEART after-school program. Her long days on Willow Glen only affords her more opportunities to demonstrate her leadership, responsibility, and her inclusivity. All grade levels often interact in HEART, and you can see just how much she is loved from TK-8th graders. Lastly, she came to Willow Glen because we are a deaf and hard-of-hearing school; she wanted to be a part of something bigger than herself. As a result of her wonderful attributes, Olivia was voted as Willow Glen Leadership's President. I am confident she will do an awesome job.

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Student Name: Timothy Gowett

School: Castle Rock Elementary School,
Woodlake

Pillar: Caring

Nominator: T. J. Ryan

Statement:

Timothy Gowett is a fifth-grade student at Castle Rock Elementary in Woodlake, CA. Tim was recently voted by his classmates to be selected as student of the month for his classroom. His teacher, Ms. Figueroa, stated that Tim is a natural leader in class and he is respected by his classmates for his contributions. One of Tim's peers wrote that Tim partners up with him when their partners are not present. Another student said, "Tim is not afraid to answer and is never going to say no to anyone that needs help." Tim has shown collaboration skills in all subjects by helping others, communicating with others in solving math problems, and engaging in rich debates with his book club.

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Student Name: Niamaya Tienda

School: Francis J. White Learning Center, Woodlake

Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Erin Ralls

Statement:

Niamaya exudes the character trait of Respect. The second week of school we received a new student in our class. This student had only attended school on zoom last year in kindergarten and had not been with kids their age. Niamaya took it upon herself to be helpful from the first day without being asked. This student needed help with organizational skills (getting the right book out, finding page numbers, keeping track of their supplies), listening skills (she would repeat directions, help them to get to the carpet and back when the direction was given), and help with work. This student did not always make it easy on her and wasn't always kind with their words, but she treated them as I would expect she would have wanted to be treated every single day, with kindness, care, compassion, patience and respect. I have been impressed with how Niamaya treats all the students in our class and how respectful she is with adults as well.

She definitely should be recognized for her respectful character.

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Student Name: Paige Perez

School: Woodlake High School, Woodlake

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Carmita Pena

Statement:

I would like to nominate Paige Perez. Paige is the Key Club senior class representative among a long list of other leadership positions. This young lady is the exemplar of responsibility. As a Key Club officer and member, Paige is someone I can count on when she signs up for an event. She is also very heavily active in other clubs, serving as the Future Farmers of America (FFA) president. Her involvement is one like no other, yet she manages to fulfill her commitments.

Paige is one of the few students who will make sure to go out of her way to let me know if she can't make a meeting or event. She is one of the most responsible students on campus, making her someone that staff and students trust.

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Student Name: Vanessa Martinez

School: Woodlake Valley Middle School,
Woodlake

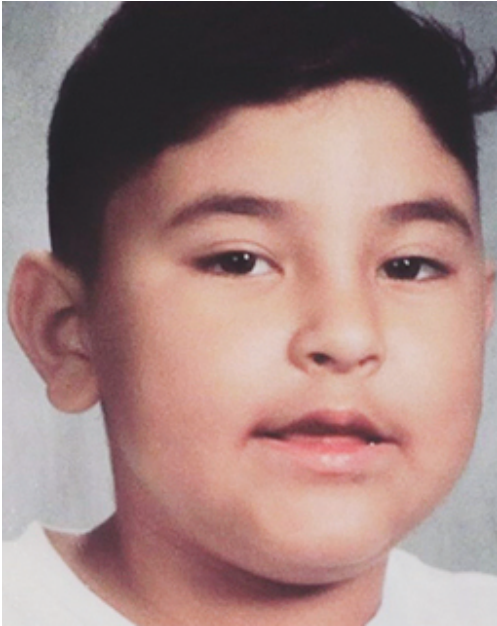
Pillar: Respect

Nominator: Brianne Underwood

Statement:

Vanessa Martinez is a student who goes out of her way to brighten the day of other people. She always has a smile on her face and never has a negative attitude toward anything. She shows respect to others by helping them when they need support, doing tasks without being asked to do them, and contributing to the classroom through academic discussions using positive language. Her kindness and respectfulness is exemplary and a guiding beacon for others to follow.

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Student Name: David Meraz

School: AcCel Yettem Learning
Center, Yettem

Pillar: Responsibility

Nominator: Debbie Michaelian

Statement:

David Meraz demonstrates the trait of responsibility by taking ownership of participating in and completing his academics. He readily engages in all lessons and activities with a cheerful demeanor and a willingness to learn.