

2013-2014 RECIPIENTS



HAYLEY BATES

From Matt Meador, Leakey ISD Ag Science Teacher:

"Hayley represents her school and town in a variety of activities, including: being a varsity cheerleader for two years, a member of playoff volleyball teams and playing on the state semi-finalist basketball team as a sophomore. Currently, she is a state qualifier in varsity golf. She lists her interests as science and agriculture, and she loves raising and caring for animals.

"Hayley excels in the show ring, competing in stock shows across the state, including Odessa, San Antonio, Houston and Ft. Worth. She has made the sale at the Kerrville livestock show every year since she was in the fifth grade. Additionally, Hayley has been a presenter at the San Antonio Livestock Chairman's Retreat since 2009.

"She was recently elected president of her 4-H club and is a part of the Pioneers Leadership Group where she regularly hosts show clinics for younger kids in the county.

"Hayley's relationship with her family, friends and church are very dear to her as well.

"Her dream job would be to become a veterinarian after finishing her education at Texas A&M University.

"Hayley continues to exceed expectations put on her by her teachers and coaches. She is truly a joy to teach and be around. I cannot think of a more deserving candidate for this award than Hayley Bates."

From Hayley Bates:

"I never thought that I would receive such a prestigious award. It is a true blessing to live in a community that makes giving back an easy task. Currently, I am helping local 4-H members select show animals for the upcoming year. I would like to say a special thank you to the committee for recognizing my hard work. God bless!"

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HANNA HEURING

From Grace Rivers, Petrolia High School teacher:

"Hanna is an outstanding young lady. She exhibits leadership skills in a variety of activities in school and out of school.

"She has been a member of the National Honor Society for three years and is currently serving as the vice president. She has put in numerous community service hours through our different projects, including Clay County Christmas outreach, Petrolia Motorcycle Fun Run and Festival, Have a Heart for Cystic Fibrosis, and community blood drives.

"Not only does Hanna participate in these activities, she also organized and led several of them. Last year, Hanna asked if we could put on a prom for the senior citizens in our community. I asked her to gather information, including finding a place to hold the event. She was able to secure a location and was willing to head up the entire event. We ran out of time last year, but have it on the calendar for this year, and Hanna will be in charge of it.

"This year, Hanna delivers the daily announcements over the intercom at school. She is responsible for making the announcements every day at the beginning of second period, and I never have to remind her.

"She also has been a member of FFA for four years, serving as an FFA officer and raising show animals for three of those years. She also is an active leader of our Student Council organization. She is always willing to take on an officer position and proves to be a great example for her peers. Last year, Hanna

received a STAR student award for Leadership from the *Times Record News*.

"All four years of high school, Hanna has been a cheerleader and has received many awards, including being chosen as a Universal Cheerleaders Association All-American for two years. Hanna choreographs the dances for the peewee and midget cheerleaders and helps the girls learn them.

"Hanna also is a leader on the volleyball, basketball and tennis teams, in addition to running cross-country and track, and participating in powerlifting.

"She manages to be involved in many extracurricular activities while maintaining her excellent GPA and taking college courses. Hanna is a leader by example. Her peers and younger students look up to her and respect her.

"After graduation, she plans to major in mass communications at Midwestern State University and will pursue a career in public relations."

From Hanna Heuring:

"I am beyond honored to receive this wonderful award. It feels amazing to have my efforts recognized and appreciated."



BRADEN TONDRE

From Mackenzie Haag, Southwest High School Agricultural Science Teacher:

"I came to know Braden last year when I started my ag teaching career at Southwest High School. The first night I met him, he greeted me with a strong hand shake and asked when we would get started practicing for various FFA events which showed me he was extremely passionate about the program and any activities he was involved in.

"He was a member on my state qualifying range and livestock judging teams and is also very active in exhibiting sheep and hog projects at all of the local and major livestock shows. Braden was named the top mini lop rabbit breeder in Texas in 2013 and is a member of 'Team Texas' rabbit judging team.

"In addition to judging and showing livestock, Braden has served as our FFA vice president and is now our current FFA president. He was also elected by his peers in the Alamo District FFA to serve as the district sentinel, which speaks volumes about his relationships with other students and people.

"Outside of FFA, Braden is a member of the local 4-H club where he has also held various offices at the local and district level and has been awarded the 4-H Golden Star Award and won first place at state competition for his 4-H swine record book. He has also attended the Texas Pork Leadership Camp, Texas 4-H Congress and the Texas Livestock Ambassador Camp at Texas Tech University.

"Braden is also a member of the National Honor Society. Last year Braden totaled over 50 community service hours between 4-H, FFA, church, and on his own.

"He plans to attend Texas A&M University to study plant and soil science. His ambitions are to develop plants that provide food and clothing for a growing population with limited resources.

"How Braden finds the time to be so great at every aspect of his life, I will never know. I am blessed as a teacher and advisor to have such a hard-working, passionate, and grounded student in my program."

From Braden Tondre:

"I am honored to receive the GROW Award and I thank you.

"I live and work on a Texas Family Land Heritage Farm that has been in my family since 1891. I plan to follow in my family's footsteps and serve Texas Agriculture just as my family has."



JOVANII HERNANDEZ

From Principal Lori Broughton, Westbrook Intermediate School:

"Jovanii Hernandez is in the 8th grade at Westbrook Intermediate School in the Clear Creek Independent School District. This young man has earned my respect and admiration during these past three years through his commitment to education and our community.

"He has started a lawn business. To hear Jovanii talk about the plans and also the way he raised the financing to make this happen signifies a young child that has an astute sense of planning and organization. He is taking pre-advanced courses and has been on the honor roll for the past three years. That is admirable since he has to care for his younger sisters after school and also maintain his lawn business.

"He is a considerate student and always willing to help when he sees a need. During his summer vacation, he came to school and helped the administrative team prepare textbooks and sort papers for our office staff. He also was here to greet the incoming sixth graders, help them open lockers and assist with directions.

"Our 8th grade students have an extra elective, and this young man has been chosen as an office aid due to his social skills, good grades and integrity that he displays each day.

"Additionally, he is an officer in the Westbrook Intermediate Leadership Development Corps (LDC). He competes on the drill team and also as a color

Guard Member in the LDC unit.

"Jovanii is a crucial member of our new recycling campaign. He volunteered to assist the campus and teach our students how to sort the lunch trash for the new recycle program. He announced to me on the third week of week, 'Did you know that we have reduced our trash bags from 56 to 13 since the recycle program began?' He is considered a leader for this new endeavor. Each day at lunch, he puts on yellow gloves and a smile and helps sort the trash into the proper spot.

"After high school, Jovanii plans to join the military (Army) and become an engineer.

"Jovanii is the type of student who makes school a great place to be each day!"

From Jovanii Hernandez:

"I feel amazed that my efforts were recognized. Thank you!"



SABRINA TORRES

From Edna Ulrich, Jourdanton High School teacher and FCCLA advisor:

"Sabrina is a senior at Jourdanton High School (JHS) and will graduate in May 2014.

"It is great to see young people like Sabrina recognized. She takes constructive criticism well, follows instructions, asks questions and completes her responsibilities to the best of her ability, while maintaining a high GPA.

"Sabrina has been involved in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, (FCCLA) since her freshman year. FCCLA sponsors Students Taking on Action with Recognition or STAR events. Members are recognized for proficiency and achievement in team or individual projects. STAR events involve leadership skills, academic skills, public speaking skills and career preparation.

"Sabrina and her teammate won first place at region and state, and a gold medal in the national FCCLA competition her freshman year. Their project centered on the FCCLA national program, STOP the Violence. After researching communication techniques and skills, they conducted an in-depth project to show their peers how negative body language can be inflammatory.

"Sabrina also has been elected as a FCCLA region officer for the last two years and has served on the Texas FCCLA Executive Council to plan region and state meetings. She has been an integral part of leadership development for Region V and JHS.

"Sabrina is one busy young lady. In addition to FCCLA, she is in both color guard and winter guard – serving as captain; Editor-in-Chief of the JHS Yearbook; and as a member of the band, the National Honor Society, and the Quill and Scroll Society. She also serves as the senior class treasurer.

"All four years, Sabrina has been a major contributor to the success of our community service projects: blood drives; charitable donations to: Pennies for Patients, Bastrop Fire Victims, SALE Tour Guide; and delivering Christmas gifts to Santa Rosa Hospital, just to name a few.

"She also is a member of the El Calvario Baptist Church, and plans to attend The University of Texas at San Antonio and major in speech pathology.

"Although Sabrina's family has had some difficult times this year, she has been a trooper, making the best of what she has."

From Sabrina Torres:

"It is refreshing and humbling to have my accomplishments recognized.

"I am grateful for the support of my family, Jourdanton ISD, Mrs. Edna Ulbrich and Texas FCCLA for giving me the opportunities to be involved. I am honored to receive the GROW Award. Thank you to the committee for selecting me from our many deserving applicants."



EVIE MONTEZ

From Emma Garcia, church elder:

"I have known Criseve since she was a small child and have seen her grow to be a kind and respectable young lady with many accomplishments. She is passionate about helping others in our community and wants to make a difference.

"Criseve Montez, who goes by Evie, is an exemplary seventh grade student at Rio Hondo Junior High School in Rio Hondo, Texas. Through her dedication to academics, she has earned the all "A" honor roll since first grade. She actively participates in Student Council, University Interscholastic League (UIL) and the girls volleyball team, as well as playing the flute in the junior high school band.

"Evie is a member of the local 4-H club, and serves as club reporter and county delegate. She also serves on the Cameron County 4-H Cooperative Extension Program Youth Advisory Board to help address issues and needs of youth development. In addition to the many school awards that Evie has earned, she also has received awards through 4-H contests. Evie has showcased her photography skills by earning first and Best of Class awards at county and district contests. She also received a ribbon in the 2013 State Fair of Texas Junior Photography contest. Evie enjoys performing science experiments and earned first place in the chemistry division of the Science, Engineering & Technology Display Board at the 2013 Texas 4-H Roundup.

"Evie's interest in food and nutrition helped earn her a first place ribbon in the grains category of the 4-H county food show contest.

"I admire Evie for being other-focused instead of self-focused. She always displays good character and is passionate about helping others. She bakes treats for the elderly neighbors throughout the year and enjoys spending time with them. This well-rounded young lady gives her time to volunteer with canned food drives, shareable wearable clothing collections and church rummage sales.

"As a church elder, I am pleased to let you know that Evie has been helping our church with our Christmas programs. This young lady has purchased toys and clothes for the needy children for the past five years using her personal savings. She has contributed hundreds of toys that include dolls, board games and stuffed animals, making Christmas wishes come true for many children because of her good character and generosity.

"Evie is interested in pursuing a career as a veterinarian specializing in large animals. Her goal is to attend Texas A&M University and earn a degree in veterinary science."

From Evie Montez:

"I am excited and honored to receive the Grow Award and would like to thank the committee for selecting me. I am always happy to help others in any way I can.



CAROLYN SWIZE

From Debbie Henning, Goliad High School counselor:

"Carolyn is in 12th grade at Goliad High School in Goliad, Texas. I am fortunate to know her through 4-H and now as her high school counselor. She is very active in clubs and organizations at school, in the community and in her church.

"At school, Carolyn is involved in the FFA, National Honor Society, Family Career and Community Leaders of America, and as an athletic trainer. She also is very active in 4-H where she is parliamentarian of her club and a council delegate on county council. She also raises goats and heifers for the Goliad County Fair.

"Carolyn is involved in many hours of community service where she participates in Silver Santa and Sag Stop, as well as serving as team Captain for her 4-H Relay For Life Team and heading fundraisers for sending supplies to the military.

"In FFA, her new Supervised Agricultural Experience project is a portable aquaponic greenhouse that does not use any soil at all. The aquaponic greenhouse grows vegetables in water where nutrients, provided by fish waste, run over the roots. She will be taking her project to the San Antonio, San Angelo and Houston Agricultural Mechanics shows.

"Carolyn is the Luminary Chair for Goliad County's Relay for Life Council where she helps honor cancer patients. She has been an individual \$1,000 fundraiser for the past three years. Her 4-H Relay for Life Team has won bronze, silver and gold recognition for all that they do for Goliad County.

"She loves to volunteer for her church where she is involved in Festival of Joy, cleans the cemetery, gives out Christmas baskets and volunteers for vacation Bible school.

"Carolyn plans to attend Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, in the fall of 2014. She plans to major in ecological restoration and minor in environmental geosciences. After college, she plans on restoring damaged habitats and hopefully more water-based habitats. Carolyn dreams of becoming a motivational speaker one day.

"Carolyn exemplifies excellence in academics, service to community and church. Her interests demonstrate that she is committed to making the world a better place. I wholeheartedly nominate Carolyn for your prestigious GROW Award."

From Carolyn Swize:

"Thank you for recognizing my service to my community and to my world. I am honored to receive this award."



MATT ROBERTS

From Theresa Horvath, McKinney High School teacher:

"Matthew is an exemplary student and role model for his peers. From the moment I met him during his freshman year, I could sense his focused, positive personality.

"I taught Matthew Algebra 2 his freshman year, AP Calculus BC his junior year, and he is currently in my Computer Science class. AP Calculus is often considered the most difficult high school course we offer, and Matthew not only completed the course his junior year, he also was able to get the top score of five on the AP Calculus BC Exam. His self-motivation and leadership are evident through his choice of rigorous courses and his involvement in school activities.

"In addition to taking these challenging courses and receiving top grades, he has been our Varsity Football kicker/punter and marches in the band's drumline. I'll never forget seeing him take off his football helmet at halftime and throw the drum over his shoulders to march on the field in his football uniform during halftime. Such dedication!

"He learned self-discipline early, earning his black belt in Tae Kwon Do his freshman year. He also has been awarded our Green Cord Service every year for his community service of more than 100 hours each year.

"He loves farming and is currently enrolled in our welding class — mostly to gain skills for use on his grandfather's farm, where each summer he feeds cattle, fixes fences, bales hay and more.

"He is clearly a positive role model to all who see him on the football field, in class and around the community. I am so glad that I've had the pleasure to get to know him. Matt is such a responsible, deserving young man."

From Matt Roberts:

"I would like to thank Mrs. Horvath for nominating me for this award in the first place.

"I am honored to receive the GROW award from the Texas Department of Agriculture.

"My family has been dedicated to agriculture for generations. The time spent on my grandfather's farm has taught me the value of hard work and prepared me for the future."