

IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

Congratulations to our 2009 Essay Contest Winners!



High School First Place/Grande Prize

GABRIELLA MARIE GUAJARDO

12TH GRADE • SOUTH SAN ANTONIO HIGH SCHOOL •
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

"Since I became a tutor I've been overwhelmed with excitement. Meeting my students lets me know that my life has changed and will not ever be the same without them... I can put my mind to it and further myself by knowing that I have the support behind me, pushing and giving me the assurance."

"A simple object, like a butterfly or a flower to us is like my class' fantasy. The playground is a place for us to relax. To them it is an alternative world where they can be anything they want to be: A butterfly for Casey; A place where Mason* can jump off the merry-go-round and scream 'Super Man!' at the top of his lungs... Casey walks over to me and whispers in my ear, 'Tomorrow, we'll be angels' She gives me a big hug, and we go our separate ways. As I'm walking with my class I tell myself, since I became a tutor, life to me has endless possibilities, dreams and goals that I can accomplish when I just sit down, relax and look at the small things in life."



Middle School First Place

JAMILLETH HERNANDEZ

8TH GRADE • DR. JAVIER SAENZ MIDDLE SCHOOL •
LA JOYA TEXAS

"Throughout my life, I have always been taught to believe that I was no good, that I could never do anything right, and that maybe I should have never been born. I felt that my parents and former teachers were always disappointed in me because of my low grades. In truth, I was even disappointed in myself... I have a purpose now because of this program, but most important is that I now know that I have a reason for being alive. Thank you Coca-Cola for caring enough to provide us with such a valuable and life-changing experience. For I truly believe that if it hadn't been for the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I wouldn't have found the real me."



High School Second Place

NUBIA CID

9TH GRADE • SOUTH SAN ANTONIO HIGH SCHOOL
• SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

"Ever since I have been in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I have gotten all A's in school. Before I was in the program, my grades weren't so good, and I didn't think much of school. Once I learned about the program and got in, I thought, I tutor the children because they need my help, and I want them to get good grades. Wouldn't they want the same for me? Since I thought that I put my effort on my school and homework. Each time I get my report card and see that I got all A's, I thank the program and the children because I know that in their eyes they see me as a role model."



Middle School Second Place

MARY A. VIDAURRI

7TH GRADE • MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL •
LA JOYA TEXAS

"When my little, fourth grade tutees learn something new and proudly display the new skill they've just learned, my heart melts. I think to myself then, I just prepared him just a tad bit more for the future. Tutoring to me means teaching my tutees, but learning in return, preparing them academically and to have a passion for what I do. There's a little exchange of knowledge going on between me and my tutees. I teach them to excel in reading, grammar, science, and occasionally math and science. In exchange, unknowingly, they teach me valuable life lessons found only in a child's heart."



High School Third Place

NORA ISAAC

9TH GRADE • UVALDE HIGH SCHOOL •
UVALDE, TEXAS

"Seeing their enjoyment in their class has made me want to be more joyful in my own classes. I seem to be trying harder, and my grades seem to be creeping higher too. I am certainly becoming a better student. My dad also seems to trust me a little bit more. He says being in the program is making me more responsible. I look forward to going to the elementary school every day... I didn't think I was that great a person until I joined the program... I love the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program."



Middle School Third Place

CRISOL ORTUÑO

7TH GRADE • ANN RICHARDS MIDDLE SCHOOL •
LA JOYA, TEXAS

"This program has made me appreciate learning and teaching. It makes me proud to know that I am making a difference in a child's life. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has given me this opportunity, and I am grateful. It has made me want to become a teacher when I graduate from school."

Scan this code to see the full essays and learn more about the IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program



www.idra.org