

IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

Congratulations to our 2011 Essay Contest Winners!



High School First Place

KAYLA RUGG

12TH GRADE • FULLER PERFORMANCE LEARNING CENTER •
FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

"What will I remember the most about this whole experience in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program?... I was on the brink of losing everything that I had worked so hard for. Then, things just went from bad and skipped over worse to extremely terrible. The only thing that kept my feet firmly planted on the ground was the knowledge that I was here for someone else, and they were depending on me... These children were my light."



High School Second Place

NABEEL SATTAR

12TH GRADE • LEE HIGH SCHOOL • HOUSTON, TEXAS

"The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has helped me in a variety of ways. It has given me new experiences that have made me a more compassionate and patient person.... tutoring opened up my eyes to many things... Since I started tutoring, I have also come to appreciate my teachers more. I understand the struggles they go through and how demanding and difficult their job is... The experiences I have had in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program have been very unique and eye opening, and the lessons I have learned have helped me become a better person in and outside of the classroom."



High School Third Place

BRIANA PARDUE

11TH GRADE • ODESSA HIGH SCHOOL • ODESSA, TEXAS

"The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has made me a better student because interaction with children has helped me be more caring and understanding. Knowing that my tutees are expecting me to be there, I enjoy going every day. I stand in the teacher's shoes as far as knowing how the student feels when he or she doesn't want to cooperate, so I try to work with my teachers more closely because of it... I understand now that we can all improve a student's outlook on school by taking time a few minutes a day to help out."



Middle School First Place

ISAAC MATA

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

"I feel so excited every day when I go to school because my student is learning a lot, and I learned how to be calmer with kids, my family and my friends. I feel I have grown in many ways. I am very grateful to the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program for giving me this opportunity... I don't want to go back to the way things were before. I only want to become even better at helping others. I signed up to help a student with his schoolwork, but in the end he helped me become a better person."



Middle School Second Place

LUIS VALLEJO

7TH GRADE • JUAN D. SALINAS MIDDLE SCHOOL •
LA JOYA, TEXAS

"When school started, I felt a big emptiness inside me. I felt that if I missed a day of class no one would notice. I also felt that I didn't make a difference in anyone's life. With me or without me, the world would be the same. Now that I started this program called the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I now have a better self-esteem. Through the VYP, three kids have made a change in my life... I now know that I am making a big difference in their lives as they are making one in my life."



Middle School Third Place

ARLETTE CALDERON

7TH GRADE • MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL •
LA JOYA, TEXAS

"Tutoring means a whole lot to me. I can't explain how it has not only helped me and many others who have struggled in school with academics... This opportunity doesn't come knocking on the door everyday, so I'm really lucky. I not only have such great tutees, but throughout the time, I think we have become friends... I feel that I have made a difference in their lives. I will always remember being part of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program."

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



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