

IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

Congratulations to our 2018 Essay Contest Winners!



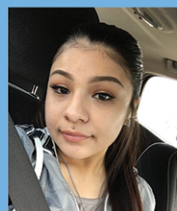
High School First Place
SANTIAGO SOSA
 11TH GRADE • ODESSA HIGH SCHOOL •
 ECTOR COUNTY ISD, TEXAS

"There are many reasons as to why I joined this the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, and I could go on and on as to why I stayed. I wouldn't even be writing this if it wasn't for my tutee who reminded me how hard it can be to learn differently from others... I know the struggles of being pulled out of class and the embarrassment of being pulled out in front of your classmates... Our experiences make us who we are. While my experience in third grade was hard, I learned that teachers are the ones who can help you see your true value. It also prepared me to work with my tutee, to show him that there are people who care, and that's what is important in life."



High School Second Place
DANIELA URQUIDÍ
 12TH GRADE • ODESSA HIGH SCHOOL •
 ECTOR COUNTY ISD, TEXAS

"I've realized that the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is more than just tutoring little kids. It's also you becoming part of an innocent child's life and them becoming part of yours... The tutees who I was assigned to this year have taught me so much over the time I've spent with them. They reminded me how essential education is and that you'll need it throughout a lifetime. They taught me patience and kindness – something that I lacked and needed. They taught me about life, things I never knew I needed, all while I was teaching them things they would need in life as well."



High School Third Place
MELANIE ESPARZA
 9TH GRADE • SOUTH SAN ANTONIO HIGH SCHOOL,
 SOUTH SAN ANTONIO ISD, TEXAS

"The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program made me open my eyes and has given me reasons that I should come to school every day, and that's exactly what I'm doing for my Pre-K tutees... I was losing interest in school because of my grades being low. I now feel good about seeing my progress reports and report cards!... All those good grades have made my attendance much better... I know [my tutees] enjoy me being there, and I wouldn't want to miss a day of seeing their smiling faces. That makes my day go on a lot better... Being in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program really made me think a lot about my future... I have learned that responsibility and dedication are important to be a good role model. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has changed me, and I am determined to follow my dreams."

High School Honorable Mention

ANDREA PEREA – 11TH GRADE • ODESSA HIGH SCHOOL • ECTOR COUNTY ISD, TEXAS

Elementary School Winner from

Charles C Ball Academy, San Antonio

FIRST PLACE – **AMBER ORTIZ** – 7TH GRADE

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



Middle School First Place
MARELY GARCÍA
 7TH GRADE • TREVINO MIDDLE SCHOOL, LA JOYA ISD, TEXAS

"After I started tutoring, everything changed. I learned to work and be patient with younger students. I also became more understanding and helpful toward my peers and siblings. Being a tutor has showed me that not only do we teach our tutees, but they also teach us and help us mature... I'm glad I was chosen to be in this program because it has made me a better person. I hope that these students I'm tutoring remember this opportunity that was given to them so that they will be the best they can be in the future."



Middle School Second Place
ISAIAS ZAVALA
 8TH GRADE • MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, LA JOYA ISD, TEXAS

"The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has helped me become a more responsible student and person. In school, I would often misbehave, and now that I have been in the program I'm afraid to get a [disciplinary] referral, because I don't want to get exited out of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program... When I teach, I want the tutees to believe that I am very smart and that they can become smarter than me. It has been a pleasure tutoring at the elementary school, because when they see me walk into their class, the tutees get very happy. The spark in their faces helps me forget all the problems that are happening at home and school."



Middle School Third Place
SIPRIANO BADILLO
 7TH GRADE • MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL • LA JOYA ISD, TEXAS

"With the paychecks that this very awesome program has given me, I get to put some food on the table for my family and me. This makes me really very proud of how I can contribute to my family!... I honestly thought I was going to change my tutees, but I guess I was wrong, because they changed me... I am looking forward to giving more and more of me, to become a way better tutor than what I already am... The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is magic! It has transformed me into a stronger person... Thank You Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program for changing my life! Keep changing lives because that is what this program does best."

Middle School Honorable Mentions

JAZARA QUINTERO – 7TH GRADE • MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL • LA JOYA, TEXAS

MÍA VILLASEÑOR – 7TH GRADE • DOMINGO TREVIÑO MIDDLE SCHOOL • LA JOYA, TEXAS

Elementary School Winners from PS94 Kings College School, New York City

FIRST PLACE – **BARBARA ROSARIO** – 5TH GRADE

SECOND PLACE – **ASHRAF ABUDULAI** – 5TH GRADE

THIRD PLACE – **QUENTIN CURRY** – 5TH GRADE

FOURTH PLACE – **JEYRUM ANDUJAR** – 5TH GRADE

FIFTH PLACE – **CARMELO REEL** – 5TH GRADE

HONORABLE MENTION – **AHMAD KABBA** – 5TH GRADE

www.idra.org

See the full essays and the elementary school essays online!