



EDUCATION

Two students win \$1,000 Miami-Dade County Youth Fair service awards

BY ADRIANNE RICHARDSON
schoolscenemia@gmail.com

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Anilegna Nuñez Abreu of South Miami High School and SaiLasya Munamarty of Archimedean Middle Conservatory recently received the \$1,000 Walter B. Arnold Jr. Youth Hall of Fame Community Service Award from the Miami-Dade County Youth Fair and Exposition for their community service projects.

The Youth Hall of Fame Community Service Award was created in 2001 in honor of Walter B. Arnold Jr., also known as Mr. Youth Fair, and aims to recognize students who give back to their community. Arnold managed the Youth Fair for 41 years and expanded it from just a four-day event to 18 days of rides, concerts, and exhibits that attract thousands each year.

Anilegna is a senior at South Miami High, and she's the co-founder of HELP, a mentoring and tutoring program. After tutoring a classmate with autism, she decided to expand the program to include 40 mentors. To date, the program has tutored 56 students. SaiLasya is a seventh-grader at Archimedean, and she was recognized for her ongoing efforts to end child exploitation. Through an assignment with her school's philosophy club, SaiLasya launched a petition on Change.org and gained 200 signatures, raised funds, and received accolades from the Miami Police Department and Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Also, the Youth Fair awarded \$100 to these student finalists for their community service efforts: Abigail Colon of Hialeah Gardens High School, April Rubin of Coral Reef High School, Anabelle Ballate of Lawton Chiles Middle School, and Paulina Almada of George Washington Carver Middle School.

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Abigail is the founder of Creatures Helping All Maximize Peace; a nonprofit focused on animal-assisted therapy to help children cope with mental illness. April is the lead writer of Dave and Mary Alper JCC's Holocaust Impact Theater, as well as an actor and producer who has created works based on immigration, foster care, and homophobia. Anabelle is the founding president of her school's Lead2Feed Club, and she coordinates the collection and donation of food to Feeding South Florida. Paulina assists her art teacher, Marlon Zuniga, by helping peers with various painting techniques, keeping a tidy classroom, and managing the Little Carver's Art Club.

Every Drop Counts Children's Poster Contest

Lina Tamer Elattar, 11, a recent graduate of Sunset Elementary School, placed first in Every Drop Counts Children's Poster Contest during the district and state competitions.



Lina Tamer Elattar, center, placed first in the district and state competitions during this year's Every Drop Counts Children's Poster Contest. She is pictured with Keyla Correia, left, and Kimberly Correia, right, co-founders of The Plastic Free Mermaids, an organization that aims to spread awareness about plastic pollution through education, outreaches, cleanups, and political advocacy.

Photo provided to the Miami Herald

The competition is part of Miami-Dade County's Water-Use Efficiency Plan and allows elementary students to use their creativity to illustrate and promote the importance of water conservation.

Lina's drawing included the quote, "it's time we realize the need to be water wise." She was recognized by Miami-Dade commissioners and received gifts from local sponsors during last month's commission meeting. She will attend George Washington Carver Middle School next school year.

Our Lady of Lourdes Academy

Elise Frias, a sophomore at Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, will participate in Envision's Advanced Medicine and Health Care Program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, this summer.

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Photo provided to the Miami Herald



Since 1985, Envision has offered more than 800,000 students the chance to explore career interest through hands-on programs offered at top universities, like Yale, Stanford, and Johns Hopkins.

Elise currently holds a 4.68 GPA, volunteers at Baptist Hospital, a member of the junior varsity volleyball team, and speaks English, Spanish and Mandarin. During the summer program, she plans to explore the medical field and decide if becoming a doctor is the right career path for her. In the meantime, she is part of her school's Bernadette Scholars Program, a rigorous program reserved for gifted students.

Miami Dade College

Miami Dade College was named one of ten finalists in the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, a national recognition program for high achieving and performing community colleges across America.

The winner, finalists and Rising Star will be announced in April 2019, and each will receive million-dollar prizes. The program selects colleges based on four key areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings rates, and success of minority and low-income students.

“These top 10 prize finalists serve as models for what community colleges can achieve. Their leaders, faculty, and staff have developed cultures that drive toward scaled improvements in completion and classroom learning as well as students’ post-graduation success...and they work hard to achieve strong results for all students, understanding the critical role community colleges play in advancing social mobility for the many students who historically have been underserved in higher education,” said Joshua Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program.

If you have news for this column, please send it to Adrienne Richardson at schoolscenemia@gmail.com.

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