

MR. CHAIRMAN, COMMISSIONERS, FRIENDS...

**IT'S MY PLEASURE THIS MORNING TO ANNOUNCE
OUR NEWEST "SHINING SCHOLARS."**

**I REALLY ENJOY THIS PRESENTATION BECAUSE IT
GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT THE
CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOME OF MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY'S FINEST YOUNG RESIDENTS.**

**THE THREE STUDENTS WE'RE HONORING TODAY
ARE BEING RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP,
SCHOLARSHIP AND OVERALL EXCELLENCE.**

**THEY ALSO SHARE A PASSION FOR COMMUNITY
SERVICE.**

**AS WITH PAST "SHINING SCHOLARS," THEIR
PROFILES ARE FEATURED IN OUR "HALL OF STARS"
ON MY WEBSITE.**

**AND NOW, MR. CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS,
IT'S MY PRIVILEGE TO INTRODUCE OUR LATEST
"SHINING SCHOLARS."**

**OUR "EMERGING LEADER" IS BLAKE MILLER, A
SENIOR AT PALMER TRINITY SCHOOL, WHO LIVES IN
COMMISSIONER SUAREZ'S DISTRICT.**

BLAKE HAS SHOWN A REMARKABLE DEDICATION TO SPORTS, AND HAS LETTERED IN FIVE YEARS OF VARSITY BASEBALL, FOUR YEARS OF VARSITY FOOTBALL, AND TWO YEARS OF VARSITY BASKETBALL. HE WAS ALSO NAMED TOP PLAYER OF THE YEAR AND TOP RUSHER.

BLAKE IS THE PRESIDENT OF PATRIOT OUTREACH, A STUDENT-RUN ORGANIZATION STARTED BY HIS OLDER BROTHER THAT COLLECTS USED SPORTS EQUIPMENT, UNIFORMS AND SHOES FROM LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS. THIS EQUIPMENT IS THEN DONATED TO IMPOVERISHED CHILDREN IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. BLAKE'S GROUP HAS CONDUCTED ANNUAL DRIVES FOR 10 CONSECUTIVE YEARS AND HAS COLLECTED MORE THAN 70,000 PIECES OF GEAR.

BLAKE IS ALSO A 2016 SILVER KNIGHT AWARD NOMINEE. HE WILL ATTEND THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI AND PLANS TO MAJOR IN ECONOMICS AND SPORTS ADMINISTRATION.

LET'S GIVE BLAKE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

OUR “UNSTOPPABLE SCHOLAR” IS DASON KELLY, A SENIOR AT WILLIAM H. TURNER TECHNICAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL, WHO LIVES IN CHAIRMAN MONESTIME’S DISTRICT.

DASON HAS ACHIEVED PERFECT ATTENDANCE FOR 12 CONSECUTIVE YEARS. HE HAS SERVED AS THE VICE PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT OF HIS SCHOOL’S STUDENT EXECUTIVE BOARD, AND IS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ACHIEVER’S SOCIETY.

DASON HAS COMMITTED HIMSELF TO IMPROVING THE WORLD AROUND HIM. AS A JUNIOR, HE PARTICIPATED IN AN EXECUTIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AT F.I.U.

HE COMPLETED 1,000 HOURS IN THE PROGRAM, DURING WHICH TIME HE HONED HIS PROFESSIONAL SKILLS. HIS EFFORTS ALSO BENEFITTED OVER 100 STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO THE PRE-COLLEGE PROGRAM.

DASON HAS ALSO SERVED THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING WALK-A-THONS, BEACH CLEAN-UPS, CELL PHONE AND INK RECYCLING PROGRAMS, FOOD

DONATIONS, FUNDRAISERS, MENTORING AND NURSING-HOME VISITS.

AFTER DASON GRADUATES, HE'LL ATTEND FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY IN TALLAHASSEE AND ENROLL IN THE FIVE-YEAR M.B.A. PROGRAM.

LET'S CONGRATULATE DASON!

LAST, BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, OUR "PURSUER OF EXCELLENCE" IS VANESSA GONZALEZ, A JUNIOR AT THE MARITIME AND SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY, WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER SOSA'S DISTRICT.

VANESSA HAS A 4.5 GPA. SHE LOVES PHOTOGRAPHY AND HAS DEDICATED FIVE YEARS TO THE SPORT OF FENCING.

AS THE CAPTAIN OF HER TEAM, SHE HAS COMPETED IN THREE U.S.A. NATIONAL TOURNAMENTS, PLACING FIRST IN THE SUNSHINE STATE GAMES AND THE REGIONAL JUNIOR CADET CIRCUIT.

VANESSA IS THE FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF "BOOKS BREAK BOUNDARIES," THROUGH WHICH

SHE VISITS PRE-SCHOOLS TO READ TO CHILDREN AND GIVE THEM BOOKS.

SHE STARTED THE ORGANIZATION TO SHARE HER LOVE OF BOOKS WITH UNDERPRIVILEGED STUDENTS, WHILE ADVOCATING FOR MORE ACCEPTANCE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY.

VANESSA IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST "YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE." THE COMMITTEE ALLOWS HER TO TAKE PART IN SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS AND NETWORK WITH PROFESSIONALS IN THE COMMUNITY. SHE HAS EVEN MET WITH STATE REPRESENTATIVES IN TALLAHASSEE TO DISCUSS SOCIAL ISSUES FACING YOUTH TODAY.

VANESSA PLANS TO ATTEND A TOP UNIVERSITY TO STUDY BUSINESS AND EDUCATION, AND TO FENCE AT THE COLLEGIATE LEVEL. SHE ALSO HOPES TO CREATE A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION BASED ON "BOOKS BREAK BOUNDARIES."

LET'S APPLAUD VANESSA FOR HER REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS!

MR. CHAIRMAN, COMMISSIONERS, FRIENDS...

THESE YOUNG MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS ARE SHINING EXAMPLES OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S BRIGHT FUTURE...AND AN INSPIRATION TO US ALL.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN CONGRATULATING THEM FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS, HARD WORK AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

CONGRATULATIONS, BLAKE, DASON AND VANESSA!

