

MADAME CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS...

MAY IS A SPECIAL MONTH IN MANY WAYS...

AND THIS MONTH, WE HAVE TWO OCCASIONS TO CELEBRATE THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SOME OF THE OUTSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

AT THE LAST COMMISSION MEETING, WE HONORED THE MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS FOR APRIL.

AND AT TODAY'S MEETING, WE RECOGNIZE THE SHINING SCHOLARS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY.

THESE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN REPRESENT THE HIGHEST ACHIEVEMENT IN THE AREAS OF SCHOLARSHIP, LEADERSHIP, AND OVERALL EXCELLENCE.

THEY WILL ALSO BE FEATURED IN THE HALL OF STARS SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE ALONG WITH ALL PAST WINNERS.

AND NOW, THE MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY:

OUR UNSTOPPABLE SCHOLAR IS ERIKA BELLO-PARDO, A SENIOR AT ST, BRENDAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER DIAZ' DISTRICT.

ERIKA HAS A PASSION FOR SOCCER, BUT IN 2011, SHE HAD A SEVERE KNEE INJURY THAT RESULTED IN NINE MONTHS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY.

THIS INJURY WAS FOLLOWED BY A TRAINING ACCIDENT THAT REQUIRED HER TO UNDERGO SURGERY ON HER LEFT FOREARM.

ALTHOUGH SHE RECOVERED FROM HER INJURIES, SHE COULD NOT RETURN TO PLAY HIGH LEVEL SPORTS.

SHE THEN DECIDED TO DEVELOP HERSELF AS A STUDENT, FOCUSING ON ACADEMICS AND SERVICE.

ERIKA HAS PARTICIPATED IN THE GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER COMMERCE'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AND THE BAPTIST HEALTH VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.

SHE ALSO SERVED IN MANAGING SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES TO SUPPORT DIGITAL POLITICAL ACTIVISM AND MOTIVATE VENEZUELAN VOTERS.

ERIKA ALSO WRITES A REGULAR COLUMN IN THE SCHOOL'S NEWSPAPER...

WHERE SHE PROVIDES IMMIGRANT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INFORMATION ON SCHOLARSHIPS, COLLEGE APPLICATIONS, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS.

ERIKA PLANS TO ATTEND FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY TO SERVE THE SPORTS COMMUNITY BY BECOMING A DOCTOR OF SPORTS MEDICINE.

LET'S GIVE ERIKA A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

OUR EMERGING LEADER IS NAVEED LALANI, A JUNIOR AT THE SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED STUDIES, WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER DENNIS C. MOSS' DISTRICT.

NAVEED IS A YOUTH LEADER AT HIS MOSQUE AND HAS BEEN SELECTED TO LEAD THE CONGREGATION IN PRAYER.

HIS OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP LED HIM TO TRAVEL TO DALLAS, TEXAS, TO LEAD A CONGREGATION OF 8,000 PEOPLE IN PRAYER.

IN JULY OF 2013, NAVEED WAS SELECTED AS ONE OF 64 MUSLIM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO PARTICIPATE IN A MONTH-LONG TRIP TO MOMBASA, KENYA, TO PARTICIPATE IN A PROJECT KNOWN AS GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS.

IN KENYA, HE INTERACTED WITH STUDENTS FROM 13 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, INCLUDING AFGHANISTAN, CANADA, IRAN, SYRIA, AND UGANDA, AMONG OTHERS, AND BECAME INTERESTED IN PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE DISABLED.

AT HIS SCHOOL, NAVEED IS INVOLVED IN THE ROBOTICS CLUB, NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, TENNIS, MU ALPHA THETA HONORS MATH CLUB, SPORTS CLUB, PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB, AND THE ROCKETRY CLUB.

ADDITIONALLY, HE WORKS PART-TIME IN HIS FAMILY'S BUSINESS.

NAVEED HOPES TO ATTEND MIT TO PURSUE A MAJOR IN COMPUTER ENGINEERING AND TO ONE DAY WORK FOR APPLE.

LET'S GIVE NAVEED A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

AND, OUR PURSUER OF EXCELLENCE IS KATHERINE CEBALLOS, A SENIOR AT MIAMI SPRINGS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, WHO LIVES IN CHAIRWOMAN REBECA SOSA'S DISTRICT.

KATHERINE HAS A 5.14 GPA.

SHE IS A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, HEALTH OCCUPATIONS STUDENTS OF AMERICA, MEDICAL HAWKS, AND HER SCHOOL'S COLOR GUARD.

KATHERINE IS ALSO VICE PRESIDENT OF THE MIAMI SPRINGS SENIOR HIGH ANCHOR SERVICE CLUB, WHICH WON THE INTERNATIONAL OUTSTANDING ANCHOR CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR 2013.

THROUGH HER LEADERSHIP, THE CLUB HAS CONTRIBUTED OVER 4,500 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AND COMPLETED 80 SERVICE PROJECTS LAST YEAR.

KATHERINE HAS ALSO INITIATED *LET'S BUILD IT!*, A PLAYGROUND PROJECT AT THE ACADEMY FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL...

AND HAS SPEARHEADED MULTIPLE EFFORTS TO HELP PREVENT BRAIN-RELATED INJURIES.

KATHERINE IS ALSO A PHOTOGRAPHER. SHE WON FIRST PLACE IN THE CORAL GABLES PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION IN THE TEEN ARCHITECTURE CATEGORY.

HER ARTWORK HAS ALSO BEEN EXHIBITED AT MIAMI SPRINGS CITY HALL.

SHE INTENDS TO USE HER ARTISTIC GIFTS TO PURSUE A CAREER IN PHOTOGRAPHY.

LET'S GIVE KATHERINE A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

MADAME CHAIR, PLEASE JOIN ME IN
CONGRATULATING OUR SHINING SCHOLARS...

AND LET'S GIVE THEM ONE LAST ROUND OF
APPLAUSE!

