

Support Quality EDUCATION

QUARTERLY UPDATE FY2016

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Animal Essay Contest

Nearly 1,500 public, private, charter and home school students participated in the [15th Annual Animal Essay Contest](#). Designed to promote responsible pet ownership, the contest is open to students in grades 3-6 who live within the Arlington city limits.

Each winner received a Kindle Fire, made possible by Beacon E&P and

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photo credit: Landon Hearne

Teen Tech Week

On March 10, the Arlington Public Library and the University of Texas at Arlington's Fabrication Lab (FAB Lab) introduced some new technologies to teens through interactive demonstrations designed to be fun as well as educational. This national Teen Tech Week initiative was aimed at teens, their parents, educators and

other concerned adults. It gave students hands-on experience with computers, software and Internet tools to ensure they're competent and ethical users of digital media, especially the nonprint resources offered through libraries, such as e-books, e-readers, databases, audiobooks and social media.

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2016 Contest Winners

Grade 3 Essay Topic: *If you were asked to help at a local animal shelter, what do you think you would be asked to do?*

- **1st:** Asaya Matsumoto, Butler Elementary (pg. 1 with Mayor Pro Tempore Sheri Capehart and AISD Board Secretary John Hibbs)
- **2nd:** Carys Sherer, J.B. Little Elementary (above with her mom at EECU opening her account)
- **3rd:** Lubyana Faizi, Imogene Gideon Elementary

Grade 4 Essay Topic: *What changes do cats and dogs have to make to live and survive as homeless pets?*

- **1st:** Katelin Crain, St. Maria Goretti (pg. 2 third from top with her family)
- **2nd:** Nautica Wood, Williams Elementary
- **3rd:** Arshleen Bains, Janet Brockett Elementary

Grade 5 Essay Topic: *What advice would you give to pet owners in order to prevent overpopulation of cats & dogs?*

- **1st:** Nicke Nguyen, Cross Timbers Intermediate (pg. 2 top right with her class)
- **2nd:** Andrea Medrano, Williams Elementary
- **3rd:** Aalaa Assaad, Manera STEM Academy

Grade 6 Essay Topic: *How would an overpopulation of homeless cats and dogs affect our local ecosystem?*

- **1st:** Grace Wilson, home school student (pg. 2 second from top with her mom at Animal Services Center)
- **2nd:** Tatiana Boyd, Dunn Elementary
- **3rd:** Isabella Rios, Cross Timbers Intermediate

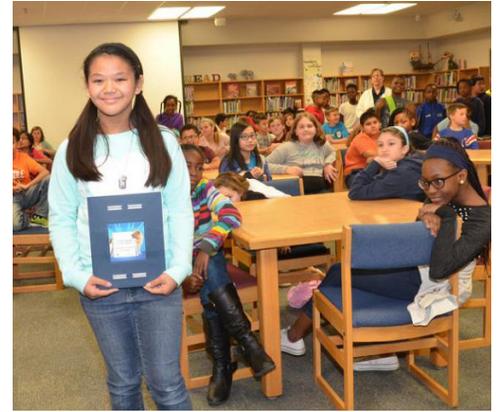
Highlights

Animal Essay Contest

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the City of Arlington, along with a \$100 savings account, compliments of Employees Education Credit Union (EECU), Beacon E&P and the City of Arlington.

“All animals are important because they are living creatures that don’t make humans lonely on this planet,” says first-place winner Asaya Matsumoto, a Butler Elementary third-grader and self-proclaimed animal advocate, who’s taking her commitment to the next level. Rather than birthday presents, she’ll ask family and friends for donations to pool funds into an endangered animal adoption from the World Wildlife Fund website.



2016 Contest Winner Highlights:

- Feb. 5 - winners announced during surprise classroom visits
- Feb. 20 - trip to open savings accounts at the EECU
- Mar. 1 - City Council recognition and special reception attended by their families
- Mar. 6 - Animal Services Center group tour and reading of award-winning essays



2016 Animal Essay contest winners standing in order as listed in column at left.

Top row - sixth grade 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

Next-to-top row - fifth grade 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

Next-to-bottom row - fourth grade 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

Bottom row - third grade 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.



Updates

Mentoring Arlington Youth (MAY) Program

On December 3, student mentees spent a half day with a working professional then had lunch with all students in the program and their mentors for the day. This allowed them interaction with men in executive-level positions around the City of Arlington, who discussed operational responsibilities and their journey to obtain their career paths.

As mentor for the day, Deputy City Manager Gilbert Perales took Raul DelaTorre on visits with his Strategic Support service team directors to give his young mentee a firsthand overview and up-close access to Human Resources, Information Technology, Municipal Court and Water Utilities.

Perales, who has also been selected to serve on the Arlington Juvenile Case Manager Diversion Program Board that works in conjunction with the MAY program, says of his mentoring experience, "The privilege to provide a child an opportunity to dream of the endless possibilities life has to offer is a gift not to be taken lightly."

Launched October 2015, 10 young men at Workman Junior High were selected for weekly mentoring with male police officers, AISD educators, City of Arlington leaders and community leaders. On March 31, 10 new MAY seventh-graders met their mentors, described as "wise guides" by



Workman Junior High student Raul DelaTorre with Deputy City Manager Gilbert Perales.

Judge Stewart Milner. The students in Class 2 will spend May 19 with City executive leaders.

Started by Lt. Tarrick McGuire, [MAY](#) is a collaborative effort of Arlington Police, Arlington ISD and Arlington Municipal Courts to help young men reach their highest potential, reduce juvenile recidivism and build legitimacy among communities.



The contest brings awareness to caring for homeless pets and how important it is for pet owners to spay and neuter their pets to prevent overpopulation of cats and dogs.



Cheri Colbert, Code Compliance Services Volunteer Administrator and Animal Services Essay Contest Coordinator

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photo credit: Landon Hearne

Teen Tech Week *(continued from page 1)*

Teen Tech Week took place from March 7 to March 12, 2016. Sessions included podcasting, robotics, filmmaking and gaming. The week concluded with a Maker Competition on Saturday, March 12, and teams competed in a series of challenges using tools such as Littlebits, Makey Makeys, recycled materials and more.

Arlington was one of 20 recipients to receive a 2016 Teen Tech Week Grant from the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Services Association. The Library's \$1,000 grant was used to support digital literacy programming for and with underserved or marginalized teens in grades 6 through 12.

Arlington Public Library (APL)



about with my own grandparents.”

This is part of the Senior to Senior program, which partners high school students with senior citizens. The program encourages the exchange of stories and shared

On February 3, a group of nine high school students from Pantego Christian Academy (PCA) spent the afternoon at the Texas Masonic Retirement Center (TMRC) in central Arlington, focused on the topic *Remember School Days*.

Meredith, a PCA senior and second-year participant in the program said, “I like getting to have conversations with everyone and getting to know the residents. I like having topics like these to talk

experiences between generations. They discussed how they traveled to school, what they ate for lunch and what games they played between classes.

“They’re just little twinklings, little nothings, until you begin talking about them,” TMRC resident Ann noted about the memories recalled during the 90-minute program. Two TMRC residents noted how they rode horses to school, while the high school students, ranging

from age 14-17, brought their elders up to speed on Pokemon trading cards and modern dress codes.

APL purchased BiFolkal Kits with a Texas Reads grant. The kits are used to target all the senses by combining tactile items, scratch-and-sniff cards, old photos, singalong songs and games to encourage people to remember the stories of their lives.

“There’s a wonderful synergy, and the Library is there to capture and record it all,” says Library Services Manager Debi Wood, whose team was eager to continue the program at the completion of the grant.

“This is a piece of our history we want to gather and preserve for generations.”

Two more meetings of the Senior to Senior group are scheduled for spring 2016.

Proclamation

During Mayor Jeff Williams’ visit to the Southeast Branch Library, he declared April 5, 2016, a Day of Recognition for National Service and presented a proclamation to AmeriCorps VISTA members who run the Reading Corps program.

VISTA service is a one-year position focused on bettering an aspect of the community. The Arlington members run APL’s Reading Corps program - from recruiting volunteer tutors to reaching out to schools with students who need

reading help. Library Services Manager Ivonne Kieffer says, “It takes a lot of passion to dedicate a year of your life to a cause, and seeing their efforts recognized by our City leaders is a wonderful thing.”

Following the proclamation, Mayor Williams visited with the Reading Corps students and read three picture books to them. He also answered questions from the young audience, including “How do you like being a mayor?” and “Do you get to vote for the next president?”



Reading Corps is currently offered for children in prekindergarten to second grade at sites around Arlington. More information about the program and becoming a volunteer tutor can be found on [APL’s website](#).