

Triad Middle student earns one of St. Louis Region Money Smart Essay Contest Awards

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ST. LOUIS — The Greater St. Louis Financial Education Collaborative, in partnership with United Way of Greater St. Louis, recently awarded scholarships to three St. Louis-area students through the Money Smart Kid Essay Contest. Students in sixth through eighth grade from schools around the region were asked to demonstrate their knowledge of money management and discuss the connection between financial and physical health.

Sandra Garcia Lopez, an eighth grader at Triad Middle School in St. Jacob, Ill., was the contest's grand prize winner and received a \$2,000 scholarship. Second place winner Caroline Black, a seventh grader at Fort Zumwalt North Middle School in O'Fallon,

Mo., won \$1,000 and Josiah Olden, an eighth grader at Pontiac Junior High School in Fairview Heights, Ill., received \$500 for third place. (A photo of Olden and Garcia Lopez accepting their awards can be found [here](#); a photo of Black accepting her scholarship can be found [here](#).)

“United Way, along with our sponsors and the Greater St. Louis Financial Education Collaborative, is proud to continue to host this Money Smart Kids Essay Contest as a way to engage local children and youth in financial education and the importance of good money management skills,” said Debbie Irwin, community economic development director, United Way of Greater St. Louis.

The essay contest was sponsored by COUNTRY Financial, the Metropolitan St. Louis CRA Association, and Vantage Credit Union.