

Two Students Recognized for Empathy and Hard Work at Alton School Board Meeting

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - Two students were recognized for their character at the recent Alton Community Unit School District #11 (ACUSD11) Board of Education meeting.

The Board honored Miguel Hernandez and Jack Phillips as the Optimist Students of the Month during their regular meeting on Oct. 17, 2023. This award signifies that both students are kind and hardworking.

Dr. Cindy Inman, the principal of Alton Middle School, introduced Hernandez and commended his good character. She noted that he is always empathetic and “exhibits qualities that most eighth graders do not have.”

“He is the kindest person I’ve ever met,” she said. “Miguel made the statement — and this goes to show what type of student, what kind of human being he is — Miguel states he loves when he helps others that are in need. And that is a good thing for a middle school student.”

Inman also read comments from a few of Hernandez’s teachers, who all highlighted his empathy and effort in school. Hernandez was recently inducted into the National Junior Honor Society. He is a member of the AMS baseball team and plays many sports outside of school, including soccer, basketball and boxing. He also volunteers at Abundant Life Church.

As Hernandez was congratulated by the Board of Education, member Barry Macias said that he sees Hernandez at the gym every morning at 6 a.m., adding that it’s another sign of his discipline and hard work.



The Optimist Student of the Month recognition always honors a middle school student and an elementary school student. West Elementary School Principal Dr. Brian Saenz introduced Phillips as a “very responsible, respectful and hardworking young man.”

“Jack was an easy selection for Student of the Month,” Saenz said. “He’s a straight A student and truly loves school. Jack’s mom took him out to an appointment the other day and offered to take him to lunch, and he turned her down because he needed to get back to school.”

Phillips’s classmates recently elected him to be the CEO of his class. He always participates in the district’s math competition, Young Authors program and the science fair. He also plays the cello in the school orchestra and the saxophone in the band, and he is a member of the Alton Youth Sympathy Orchestra.



The Optimist Students of the Month receive a \$25 gift card. They also get to choose where to donate an additional \$25 in the community. Hernandez donated his money to the 5As Association in Godfrey. Phillips donated to Alton Pride, Inc.