

NEWS RELEASE



National Children's Oral Health Foundation®
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America's ToothFairy Announces 2016 Youth of the Year Award Winners

(Charlotte, NC – June 24, 2016) – America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation® is proud to announce its 2016 Youth of the Year Award winners. This award recognizes high school students who have made exceptional efforts to raise awareness of the importance of children's oral health and wellness in their community.

This year's winners, Sabrina Herbert, Sara Rodriguez, Iris Valadez, and Caroline Vasquez, are members of the HOSA: Future Health Professionals chapter at Southwest High School in El Centro, CA, and actively participate in the #MySmileMatters Youth Movement. Launched in 2013, #MySmileMatters is an initiative of America's ToothFairy engaging nearly 600,000 youth in oral health education and advocacy.

Under the leadership of Jackie Valadez, RDH, this year's award winners demonstrated exceptional understanding of the issues pertaining to children's dental health and wellness, while also holding an array of creative events to improve oral health literacy in their school and community. Specific activities included oral health educational presentations, social media advocacy, planting of Smile Gardens, and water demonstrations.

The awards, which include a \$250 scholarship, will be presented at the HOSA 40th Annual International Leadership Conference in Nashville, TN, today. The students will also present highlights from their #MySmileMatters activities at a conference seminar for fellow HOSA students.

All #MySmileMatters participants utilize the #MySmileMatters National Youth Engagement Plan, which guides youth and their adult allies in integrating dental health education and learning into their schools and communities. The 2016-2017 National Youth Engagement Plan has the theme "Cavities are NOT Supposed to Happen" and focuses on "changing beliefs, changing behavior, and changing the environment" of children's dental health and wellness. The National Youth Engagement Plan, available for free to all interested student groups, is available now at www.AmericasToothFairy.org. Contact youth@ncohf.org or call (800) 559-9838 to learn more.

About America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation®

America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness of one of the most prevalent chronic childhood illnesses: pediatric dental disease, facilitating the delivery of comprehensive oral health services and improving quality of life for underserved children. Through the #MySmileMatters Youth Movement, collaborative partnerships with a diverse array of national service organizations, growing network of non-profit clinical partners, dedicated professional and student volunteers, and suite of high-impact community education and service programs, America's ToothFairy is building a powerful, united effort to eliminate tooth decay and protect the smiles of our most vulnerable children. For more information, visit www.AmericasToothFairy.org.