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[Home](#) > 40 High Schoolers Win Laptops as Part of MTS & Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling Essay Contest

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*Winners represent 25 high schools across San Diego County*

### **Winners reactions and virtual ceremony video**

**San Diego** – The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) announced and celebrated the 40 winners of the 20th annual MTS and Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling Laptop Scholarship Essay Contest, which awards top-scoring students with brand new laptop computers. The winning students came from 25 high schools from across San Diego County, and were awarded a Dell – Inspiron Touch Laptop and a carry-on laptop backpack, a prize value of \$800.

“In the past few years, technology has become a crucial part of learning in every student’s life, and having a reliable computer can make a huge difference in academic performance,” said Nathan Fletcher, MTS Board Chair and San Diego County Board Supervisor. “We love to get young people thinking critically about public transit, and I am proud of the work these students put into these essays. We are grateful to Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling for sponsoring this contest and the great partnership with San Diego County Office of Education for making it a success.”

For the 2022 Laptop Scholarship Essay Contest, students in grades 9-12 were asked to write a persuasive essay on the value of the SANDAG Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP) pilot program, and why it should or should not continue. Since May 2022, all youth 18 and under have had access to free transit across the county through the YOP pilot program. As part of the essays, students were also able to give feedback about the program and suggestions to further expand the opportunities it provides.

“Young people are powerful agents of change and it’s admirable that MTS worked to incorporate their feedback into the YOP process,” said Dr. Paul Gothold, San Diego County Superintendent of Schools. “I am proud of the students who participated in the laptop scholarship essay contest and thankful to MTS and the Reyes Coca Cola Bottling Company for their continued support.”

“We are proud to be part of the San Diego community and are honored to support local students through this program,” said Steve Raubolt, San Diego Market Unit President, Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling. “We wish these students the best of luck in their future and hope they continue to thrive in their education.”

The Laptop Scholarship Essay Contest is a long-standing event partnership between MTS, Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling Company and the San Diego County Office of Education. To be eligible to win, students had to be enrolled in a San Diego County high school.

For more information about the Laptop Scholarship visit our [website](#).

Winners of the 2022 MTS & Reyes Coca-Cola Bottling Laptop Scholarship Essay Contest are:

Name	Last Name	Grade	High School
Lanae	Alameida	11	High Virtual Academy
Madison	Amezcuca-Cruz	10	Grossmont Secondary School
Ishmael	Melendez-Covarrubias	12	San Diego High School
Athena	Ballensky	12	San Dieguito Academy
Valens	Bandy	12	Sage Creek High School
Sanjay	Bharadwaj	11	Del Norte High School
Delanny	Cardenas	9	La Costa Canyon High School
Daniel	Cho	9	Canyon Crest Academy
Bushra	Coban	11	San Dieguito High School Academy
Ciara	Day	12	San Diego High School
Eloisa	De La Rosa	12	San Diego High School
Nina	Dutton	9	Del Lago Academy

Javier	Garcia	11	Carlsbad Highschool
Micaela	Groke	11	La Costa Canyon High School
Luckjoyson	Hong	12	Scripps Ranch High School
Mary	Huynh	9	East Village Middle College High School
Helena	Jiang	10	Canyon Crest Academy
Shabnam	Kakar	11	West Hills High School
Ashley	Knowlton	11	San Marcos High School
Fatima	Lopez Retana	11	Fallbrook Union High School
Alexandra	Mapilisan	11	Morse High School
Itzel	Martinez	12	High Tech High Chula Vista
Mukund	Mathur	9	La Costa Canyon High School
Lucia	Mochel	10	Fallbrook Union High School
Hector	Moreno	11	Hoover High School
Maya	Murchison	11	Eastlake High School

Justin	Ordonez	12	Kearny High Educational Complex
Diego	Paz	12	Montgomery High School
Paulo	Rivera	11	Eastlake High School
Vijay	Roy	10	La Jolla High School
Isabella	Schott	9	SD MET High School
Wyatt	Spencer	9	San Diego High School
Lauren	Suh	10	Torrey Pines High School
Litong	Tian	10	Canyon Crest Academy
Cash	Tieman	10	San Dieguito Academy
Nirja	Trivedi	11	Westview High School
Violet	Uribe	11	Montgomery High School
Leonel	Villanueva	10	Eastlake High School
Grace	Wheeler	12	San Dieguito Academy
Laurence	Yu	11	Pacific Ridge School

## **About MTS**

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates more than 100 bus routes and three Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego. MTS is a leader in advancing initiatives to create a greener, cleaner and better-connected transit system in San Diego. Each weekday more than 220,000 passenger trips are taken throughout the MTS system taking people to work, school, health appointments and other essential trips. In FY 2022, MTS served more than 57 million riders. For service schedule updates, news, alerts and more information on how you can use public transportation, go to [www.sdmts.com](http://www.sdmts.com)

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