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Monday, May 13, 2019

San Diego – The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) recognized the 40 winners of the annual MTS and Coca-Cola Laptop Scholarship Contest in a ceremony at the 12th & Imperial Transit Center on Friday, May 10. MTS had students from 70 different high schools enter the contest.

The top 40 scoring students came from 27 different campuses and were awarded a 15.6" HP Touch-Screen laptop and a North Face laptop backpack. Students in grades 9-12 were required to submit an essay about lowering the cost of student transit passes and how this can help increase ridership. MTS also asked students to provide strategies for how MTS can encourage more students to ride.

"It was great that winners came from so many campuses. Their essays presented convincing ideas. Students were required to think critically about the way public transit shapes our communities," said Paul Jablonski, MTS chief executive officer. "We appreciate the partnership with Coca-Cola and the San Diego County Office of Education in making this contest a success. It's a great learning experience for the students."

The laptop scholarship contest is a long-standing event partnership between MTS, Coca-Cola Refreshments of San Diego and the San Diego County Office of Education. To be eligible to win, students had to be San Diego County residents and enrolled in a San Diego County high school.

Winners of the 2019 MTS & Coca-Cola Laptop Scholarship Contest are:

Bezalel Aboye

The Preuss School UCSD

Maria Aguirre

The Preuss School UCSD

Ashley Asadi

Del Norte High School

Bryan Quezada-Ayala

Diego Hills Central Charter School

Kate Calhoun

Fallbrook Union High School

Cherish Clarkson

Grossmont High School

Holly Day

El Capitan High School

Aleia Dela Cuadra

High Tech High Chula Vista

Robert Dennett

River Valley Charter School

Fulton Elkins

Valley Center High School

Lindsey Flores

Clairemont High School

Mandy Frazer

El Capitan High School

Alexsandra Garcia

High Tech High Chula Vista

Nephtali Garcia

Sweetwater Union High School

Arianna Girmai

Hoover High School

Melissa Hernandez

Granite Hills High School

Bennett Hochner

Sage Creek High School

Isaiah Irizarry

Bonita Vista High School

Christabelle Junaidi

Del Norte High School

Nicholas Lam

Helix Charter High School

Mark Lindgren

Canyon Crest Academy

Alexis Lona

Mater Dei Catholic High School

Valeria Montemayor

East Village High School

Emett Morrow

Rancho Buena Vista High School

Derek Murchison

High Tech High Chula Vista

Karoshi Nanavati

Rancho Bernardo High School

Jose Padilla Tapia

The Preuss School UCSD

Faith Pilbin

Fallbrook Union High School

Ethan Prom

Carlsbad High School

Jed Quiaoit

Rancho Buena Vista High School

Rusty Rinehart

Rancho Bernardo High School

Isaac Rivera

High Tech High Media Arts

Olivia Root

Helix Charter High School

Evelia Rosas

Vista High School

Neha Sahota

San Marcos High School

Juan Serrano

The Preuss School UCSD

Lauren Sherburne

Christian High School

Matthew Skimina

Fallbrook Union High School

Julia Starkey

Mira Mesa High School

Melissa Tamarkin

Valley Center High School

MTS operates 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines on 53 miles of double-tracked railway. Every

weekday more than 300,000 passenger trips are taken on MTS bus and Trolley services in 10 cities and the county. In FY 2018, MTS served more than 86 million riders.

Photo (from L to R): Paul Jablonski, MTS Chief Executive Officer; Cory Holstein, Coca-Cola Refreshments; winning students; Music Watson, San Diego County Office of Education; and Georgette Gómez, MTS Board Chair and San Diego City Council President

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Source URL:<https://mtsnet.demosite.us/news/40-high-schoolers-win-new-laptops-part-mts-coca-cola-essay-contest-0>