

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary Awards Celebrate Youth with Exceptional Character

Submitted by Bob Marino

A distinguished group of students was recently recognized for their exemplary character through the Good Character Awards, presented by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Now in its third year, this initiative honored nine students from three local middle schools: Stanley Middle School, Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, and Orinda Intermediate School. The award recipients are Amilia Drury, Mahya Hekmat, and Paul Lomeli from Joaquin Moraga; Evan Barakeh, Olivia MacDiarmid, and Bryn Van Den Broeck from Orinda Intermediate; and Surya Spitzer, Kaylee Clayton, and Arantxa Montesinos del Boccio from Stanley.

Students were nom-

inated by teachers and administrators who recognized them for their consistent displays of kindness, honesty, fairness, and community service. Mr. Fred Stambaugh, president of the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary, presented the awards following an introduction to Rotary's mission by Mr. Richard Shearer.

An inspiring keynote address was given by Ms. Thea Stratford, a senior at Campolindo High School and president of the Campo Interact Club, the high school equivalent of Rotary. In her speech, Ms. Stratford said, "What you're doing matters. Your kindness, leadership, and willingness to stand up for others is making a differ-

ence. Every small act of service creates ripples that spread farther than you might ever realize."

The award ceremony took place in Campolindo High School's library, with over 100 local attendees, including faculty, school administrators, district superintendents, civic leaders, and proud families.

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary is dedicated to various initiatives that support youth wellness and mental health within the community and beyond. Through the Good Character Awards, the organization aims to inspire young people to maintain their integrity and kindness, even when they believe no one is watching.



Rear (left to right): Surya Spitzer, Paul Lomeli, Mahya Hekmat, Kaylee Clayton, Arantxa Montesinos del Boccio.

Front (left to right): Olivia MacDiarmid, Bryn Van Den Broeck Evan Barakeh, Amilia Drury.

Photo by Leander Hauri
Provided by Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary