



**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

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COX RECOGNIZES INSPIRATIONAL STUDENT HEROES IN OKALOOSA COUNTY

Niceville – Earlier this week, Cox Communications hosted the annual Cox Inspirational Student Hero Awards in Okaloosa County, recognizing 37 students who have overcome extreme hardships in their lives. The Heroes were recognized at a ceremony on Tuesday, May 10 at Northwest Florida State College in Niceville. This is the first Heroes event that was held in person at NWFSC since the beginning of the pandemic. In 2020 and 2021, the students were recognized virtually via a television show.

“We’ve all been through some difficult times over these past couple of years, but these students have overcome so much more in their young lives,” said Cox Gulf Coast Market vice president David Deliman. “They’ve not only been through the pandemic, but other family tragedies or life challenges, and they’ve pulled through with a smile on their faces while bringing happiness to others. They deserve their time in the spotlight for being such an inspiration to us all.”

“The students we met through this program do not let the challenges they face defeat them in any way,” said Okaloosa County Superintendent of Schools Marcus Chambers. “I am extremely proud of these students and appreciative to Cox for the opportunity to celebrate them as Inspirational Heroes.”

The students were chosen by a committee of leaders at their school, due to their resilience in the face of adversity. Whether they have overcome a loss of a family member, medical issue, difficult family situation or other hardship, they did so with a positive attitude and continued to encourage and inspire others around them.

During the event, Cox presented the students with a personalized engraved medallion and certificates of honor. The students were also presented with certificates of achievement from Congressman Matt Gaetz, State Senators Doug Broxson and George Gainer and State Representatives Jayer Williamson and Patt Maney.

On Tuesday, May 3, the Okaloosa County Commissioners approved a proclamation honoring the students and proclaiming May 2022 as Cox Inspirational Student Hero month in Okaloosa County.

Okaloosa County's Cox Inspirational Student Heroes for 2022 are:

- Aaron Mellon - Crestview High School
- Adalynn Temares - Southside Primary School
- Alijah Robinson - Edge Elementary School
- Auggie Barkocy - Destin Middle School
- Brandon Lanieux - Bruner Middle School
- Caelen Simpson - Laurel Hill School
- Curtis Stoudmire - Longwood Elementary School
- Demetria Ewing - Riverside Elementary School
- Destin Karmo - Mary Esther Elementary School
- Duwan "Nikko" Bryant - Fort Walton Beach High School
- Eli Shaffer - Kenwood Elementary School
- Ella Rutland - Plew Elementary School
- Grace Knight - Bluewater Elementary School
- Hanna Stanley - Florosa Elementary School
- Hector Ramos Lara - Bob Sikes Elementary School
- Italy Kane - Destin Elementary School
- Ja'Quontay Wilks - Walker Elementary School
- Jonathan Landa - Meigs Middle School
- Kayla Norman - Ruckel Middle School
- Kaylin Stapleton - Antioch Elementary School
- Keyshawn Fountain - Silver Sands School
- Kniquey Fletcher - Northwood Elementary School
- Laisha Bautista - Shalimar Elementary School
- Leona Bozeman - Shoal River Middle School
- Logan Carter - Okaloosa STEMM Academy
- Logan Harrell - Richburg School
- Lucas Ramos de Paula - Elliott Point Elementary School
- Marissa Cottrell - Baker School
- Michael Lopez - Pryor Middle School
- Quinten Burden - Eglin Elementary School
- Rosalyn Godwin - Lewis School
- Sam Robbins - Davidson Middle School
- Sarah Barkes - Choctawhatchee High School
- Teagan Stokes - Northwest Florida Ballet Academie
- Thomas "TJ" Blacketer - Edwins Elementary School
- Tray Fullard - Niceville High School
- Victoria Morales - Wright Elementary School

The Cox Inspirational Student Hero Awards program began nearly 30 years ago in New Orleans, Louisiana. The program has spread to other Cox markets in the Southeast Region. To date, Cox has recognized nearly 4,500 students from Lafayette, Louisiana, to Gainesville, Florida.

About Cox Communications

[Cox Communications](#) is committed to creating meaningful moments of human connection through broadband applications and services. The largest private telecom company in America, we proudly serve six million homes and businesses across 18 states. We're dedicated to empowering others to build a better future and celebrate diverse products, people, suppliers, communities and the characteristics that makes each one unique. Cox Communications is the largest division of Cox Enterprises, a family-owned business founded in 1898 by Governor James M. Cox.

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