

Pass the Word Scholarship Recipients

2026 Krystal Avila Cisneros: Lindsay High School

Krystal has volunteered as a STARS after school program assistant with 2nd graders primarily focused on reading and writing. She has been described as a natural leader with numerous campus organizations and athletics. Her career goal is to study Biology at UC Irvine and become a pediatrician to give back to her Lindsay community.

2025 Roxana Vazquez Tapia: Farmersville High School

Roxana has been involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters where she has encouraged younger students with their reading fluency and love of reading. She also has tried to influence her peers, teachers and staff to enjoy reading by suggesting books she has enjoyed. She has been in leadership with Future Farmers of America. She plans to attend UC Davis.

2025 Maya Paniagua: Harmony Magnet

Maya has done several internships in elementary classrooms primarily helping students with reading. She also has worked at the Porterville Library and with the YES mentoring program. She plans to go into elementary education where she hopes to share her love of reading with young children.

2024 Keira Bixler: Redwood High

Keira created "Imagine with Keira" to share the "life changing power of storytelling." She collected over 25,000 books starting in Kindergarten which she donated to Read for Life, She also cofounded the virtual tutoring program Brainiacs Mentoring. She is currently raising money for the 2nd edition of her children's book "Imagine with Keira" in English and Spanish.

2023 Enrique Martinez: Golden West High

Enrique founded Prooyecto Ingles, a program to encourage Latino/Hispanic families to make literacy an essential part of their children's lives. When he talks with parents, he stresses that so much of his academic success is due to his mother reading to him from an early age. (His parents immigrated from Mexico with limited English.) He has spoken in Spanish to groups sharing his story and encouraging them to read to their children in Spanish. He plans to be PreMed at UC Berkeley.

2022 Anayeli Ramirez Leon: Monache High

Anayeli was involved with Porterville Celebrates Reading pre-pandemic, which through her California Scholarship Federation club morphed into Monache Celebrates Reading. The club created its own platform to spread literacy by having students film reading videos that they upload to Youtube. She was also a tutor at Bellview Elementary in a first-grade classroom where she helped students improve their literacy skills.

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2021 Helaina "Lainey" Flores: Tulare Western

Lainey Flores performed 330 hours as a student/peer tutor and volunteer at Tulare Public Library. She organized this year's "Bounty of Books" and coordinated times with leadership students and educators to use a zoom link to enter classrooms and read to students. She also coordinated book drop-offs and returns during this time.

2021 Lily Stetson: Redwood

Lily volunteered at the Visalia branch of the Tulare County Library, served on its Teen Advisory Group, and coordinated a summer reading program which included a Life-sized Candyland and "May the Fourth Be With You" event.

2021 Mia Reynolds: Tulare Union

Mia tutored her 7-year-old brother in reading while her mother Zoom taught middle school. "We spent hours learning about insects and animals, labeled diagrams, and made information books."

2020 Jessica Hulseley: Golden West

For 3 years she was the summer reading intern at the Tulare Co. Library where she oversaw the prize room, other library volunteers and served as a member of the Teen Advisory Group. In addition she helped set up and run the 2019 Book Festival.

2020 Maya Gisel Carrillo: Redwood

Through her Key Club she wrote a detailed plan that included research on "The Benefits of Reading at a Young Age" and how Key Clubs could help their local feeder elementary schools. She raised funds to provide books for 82 kindergartners which was tied to her promotion of Tulare Co. Library's Winter Reading Program. This "Books for Buddies" program will continue next year. She is currently designing the displays in the children's section of the library.

2019 Gazal Hussin: Redwood

She was a 3 year volunteer at the Tulare Co Library and during her senior year did a monthly literacy project at the Visalia Mosque titled "Bring Your Book to Life." Over 100 children ages 4-12 acted out scenes from a favorite book. She also organized to have books sent via Airlink to shelters in her mother's native country of Syria.

2018 Loveleen Kahlon: Redwood

She created a "Dream" poster made up of sticky notes from students throughout Tulare Co. as her "Act of Courage" project. With every 5 sticky notes, a book was donated to a child in Northern India, the birthplace of her parents. A total of 100 books were sent.

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2017 Claire Stetson: Redwood

She served 6 years with the Tulare County Library Advisory Group. Her senior year she developed a summer reading program with a CLUE mystery theme that won local and national awards.

2016 Caitlin Phelps: Tulare

She did a book drive through St Aloysius Church and the Manuel Torrez Family Resource Center. She collected 12,000 books and \$2,500.

2015 Sophia Stetson: Redwood

She served 4 years on the Tulare County Teen Advisory Group and worked the summer reading program each year.

2014 Madison Elick: Tulare Union

She worked with Read for Life for four years collecting books at her church and delivering books to many Tulare sites through our Books for Kids program.

2014 Marisa Martin: Golden West

She volunteered to read books to blind children and created her own touch and feel books to share with blind children in Tulare County.

2013 Olivia Vallejo: Harmony Magnet, Porterville