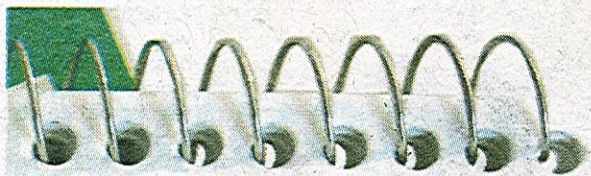


Kids of Character

This is one in a series of profiles this school year on students who best exemplify the Broward County School District's eight character education traits — cooperation, responsibility, citizenship, kindness, respect, honesty, self-control and tolerance — and patriotism as part of all eight.

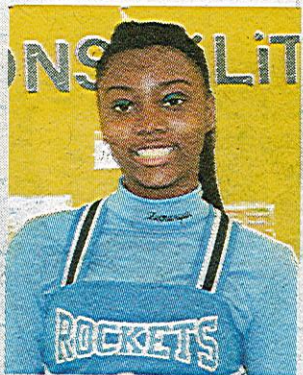


Zecharyah Brazeal

Age: 12
School: James S. Rickards Middle, Oakland Park
Grade: Seventh
Hometown: Oakland Park



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Trait: Responsibility

Zecharyah stresses helping others and wants to be a teacher, making her a much-sought-after assignment partner, mentor and tutor. She often volunteers to assist ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and ESE (Exceptional Student Education) students. She says it doesn't matter whom she reaches out to as "I just love helping."

For instance, she paired up with an ESE classmate on an anti-smoking campaign project she (Zecharyah) could have done much quicker herself. Zecharyah says working with such students "actually isn't hard to do. You just sit down with them and explain what the project is about and give them things to do in the project. It's just like sitting down with others."

She also is among a small group of students chosen to help keep classmates focused and disciplined when substitute teachers stand in. She is well-liked and trusted by all of her peers and teachers.

At home, she helps her mother clean around the house and do laundry. At and away from school, she picks up trash. She also assists elderly people with various tasks, especially ones they can't do on their own.

Teacher, Natasha Thomas: The notoriously shy Zecharyah partnered with an ESE student to write and perform a (public service announcement) that she (Zecharyah) was capable of more quickly and easily accomplishing on her own. When partnered with such peers — as she often volunteers to be — she shows tremendous responsibility and insight in both assuming the role of leader and delegating leadership tasks to empower her fellow classmates.

In times of teacher absences, Zecharyah and a core group of students help serve as self-appointed vanguards to assist the substitute instructor(s) in keeping the various classes on track. Upon the regular teacher's scheduled return, it is most certain that she will discreetly inform on both positive and negative behaviors exhibited by the students.

Parent, Tiffany Sheffield: Zecharyah's goal is to be an inspiring teacher. Zecharyah is a leader in all aspects and a respectable young lady. As a single mother, I put extra effort in raising her to be a responsible young woman and in teaching her to respect herself and others, as my mother taught me. At home, she goes beyond her daily chores assigned and steps up to help me, even when it is not needed.

I feel Zecharyah is in training to be a committed, dedicated student and teacher, a loving parent, and an outstanding citizen who will make a change in people's lives.

Zecharyah Brazeal: I want to help others with their class work, homework or whatever they need help with because I want to be the person who the world looks upon when a problem occurs. Helping others is my goal that I want to continue doing. Sometimes I help others before I help myself.

I also want to help by picking up discarded trash from people who don't know or even care how bad it is to nature. I just want to help as many people as I can who think they can't make it but really can if they put their mind to it.

It gives me so much joy inside knowing I just helped solve a problem for something and someone. Many people only think about themselves, which is selfish. I try to help with as many problems as I can, with the belief that they can also possibly help me.

I believe my deeds have an impact on others because I have seen many people follow my example so that they can improve themselves or be similarly recognized as a positive role model.

— John W. Chace

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