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Miami-Dade County Fair names two students to its hall of fame

The Miami-Dade County Fair has named two students to the 2009 Walter B. Arnold Youth Hall of Fame.

The two inductees are Nicole Ludmir, a senior from Dr. Michael M. Krop High School, and Yhineidy Castro, a seventh-grader at Henry H. Filer Middle School.

The two were selected from eight Miami-Dade County finalists who have demonstrated leadership and commitment to the community, ages ranging from 12 to 18 years.

The finalists this year were Melanie Linares, North Dade Middle School, Grade 7; Eliana Zambrana, Ruben Dario Middle School, Grade 8; Regina Anne Monge, Herbert A. Ammons Middle School, Grade 8; Natalia Pineda, William H. Turner Technical Arts High School, Grade 12; Diana M. Viera, G. Homes Braddock High, Grade 12; and Luisa Santos, Coral Reef High School, Grade 12.

"These students are true gems," Phil Clark, president and CEO of The Miami-Dade County Fair said in a release. "While maintaining excellent grades in school, they find the time to give back to their schools and wider community. The fair is honored to have them be part of the Walter B. Arnold Youth Hall of Fame."

Nicole was recognized for her work to help Alzheimer's and dementia patients at the Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged, where she has hosted an Ice Cream and Bingo Day and raised money for technology.

Her inspiration to help these patients came as a result of the loss of her grandfather nearly three years ago to Alzheimer's disease.

She also has volunteered many hours to Best Buddies, tutoring programs, Special Olympics, Daily Bread and Food Bank and other causes.

Yhineidy, through her involvement with her school's Bible club, has given countless hours to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Miami Rescue Mission and Loving Place Nursing Home.

She has collected food for the needy at Thanksgiving and has sold tickets for the fair. She played a leadership role in hosting the Bible Club's Miss Springtime Princess Pageant.

The inductees received \$1,000, a plaque and their portrait was added to the Walter B. Arnold Jr. Youth Hall of Fame. Each finalist was awarded \$100 and a plaque recognizing their achievement.

The award was named for Walter B. Arnold Jr., who also was known as "Mr. Youth Fair" and is credited for taking a small fair in Miami and turning it into the Miami-Dade County Fair, one of the largest and most successful fairs in the nation.

Arnold's entire life was dedicated to youth programs, community service and recognition of young achievers.

The Youth Hall of Fame is a manifestation of his life-long dream to honor the achievement of youth who

have demonstrated commitment to the community.

The Miami-Dade County Fair will be celebrating its 58th year March 26 through April 12.

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