

Kids with Character

This recognition showcases students who have made a difference by accepting responsibility, showing kindness, valuing others' concerns, helping resolve conflicts and honoring their commitments.

Leah Raymond, 11, was nominated to be a Chronicle-Telegram Kid With Character for her extraordinary hard work and the care she shows for others.

She was nominated by her Avon Middle School sixth-grade language arts teacher, Peggy Madej. "She is a role model in school," Madej said of Leah. "An outstanding girl who's very mature."

Madej said Leah tries to include everyone when she works in groups.

"In order to be a role model, you are someone the other kids can look up to, and I don't think she does it for the recognition because she's a quiet girl, actually," Madej said. "The way that she carries herself and the way that she treats other people shows the other kids what a good person, what a kind person looks like.

Leah's science teacher, Stephanie Reichert, has noticed how helpful she is to other students when working in groups, too.

"I think if students are struggling in class ... some students will just not do the assignment, or they'll wait for help to come to them," Reichert said. "While she actively speaks out for help for her group. And if someone isn't understanding what's going on, she is more than happy to be that helpful person to help them through it."



Leah

Earlier this year, a new sixth-grade student joined the school. Being a new student, finding a place to sit at lunch might have been tough, so Reichert introduced her to Leah and her friends.

"She has a great smile, she makes you feel comfortable, and that's why I decided to introduce the new girl to her," Reichert said.

The girls hit it off, owing to Leah's friendly nature.

"I just think she's a very compassionate person in and outside of the classroom," Reichert said. "You can definitely tell that she enjoys being with her friends and she enjoys making new friends.

"She's just a well-rounded kid."

Outside of class, Leah is on student council - a significant honor, according to Madej.

If you're chosen for student council, it's because you're someone the staff knows they can count on and we know they'll be able to carry out some of the things we need them to carry out," she said. "I think it takes a special kid to be chosen."

Additionally, Leah participates in youth group, band and the honors scholastic program, not to mention being active in her church.

Leah lives in Avon with her parents, Don and Cammy.

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For nomination criteria, go to www.chroniclet.com/nie or call Btarb Riitsko-Stephens at 329-7239.