FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plant City Champions for Youth Honors Local Students During Youth Excellence Awards Ceremony

Every fall, Plant City Champions for Youth holds an annual Youth Excellence Awards dinner recognizing eight local high school students for their outstanding accomplishments. A dinner in their honor was held at the Sadye Gibbs Martin Community Center on November 9, 2026 with the students, their guests, school representatives, and club members in attendance.

The eight students from Plant City High School (PCHS) were selected for recognition because of their efforts in athletics, academics, and community service work. Each student received an award for their accomplishments.

PCHS Principal Traci Durrance and College & Career Counselor Aimee Solomon introduced the students and summarized the youths' amazing accomplishments and involvement in community service through projects and school clubs which make them role models for the underclassmen to look up to for leadership and guidance. *<<< A copy of their bios is attached to this press release.>>>*

In addition to the recognizing the students, Plant City Champions for Youth made a financial contribution to the PCHS Senior Awards Ceremony to be held in May.

Plant City Champions for Youth president Jeb Hicks spoke to the students sharing some words of support and appreciation for their outstanding contributions to our community and wishing them the best in the future.

Plant City Champions for Youth is a local 501-c-3 organization formed to continue the legacy of the former Plant City Optimist Club and is hyper-focused on the youth of Plant City. Other programs and service projects the club members participate in include Law Appreciation Week and providing at least $8,000 in vo-tech and college scholarships for local high school graduates. The club is very active in its support of youth by working closely with the Plant City Parks & Recreation Department in their various programs such as sports skills competitions, the annual Easter Egg Hunt and the "Monster Mash" Trunk or Treat. Other support includes the youth programs of the United Food Bank & Services of Plant City and the Plant City Family YMCA along with other area youth sports programs and other needs as they arise. The Club's two fundraisers to support their community programs are an annual golf tournament and the sale of Christmas trees each year.

For more information about Plant City Champions for Youth, please visit their web site at www.pcchampionsforyouth.org.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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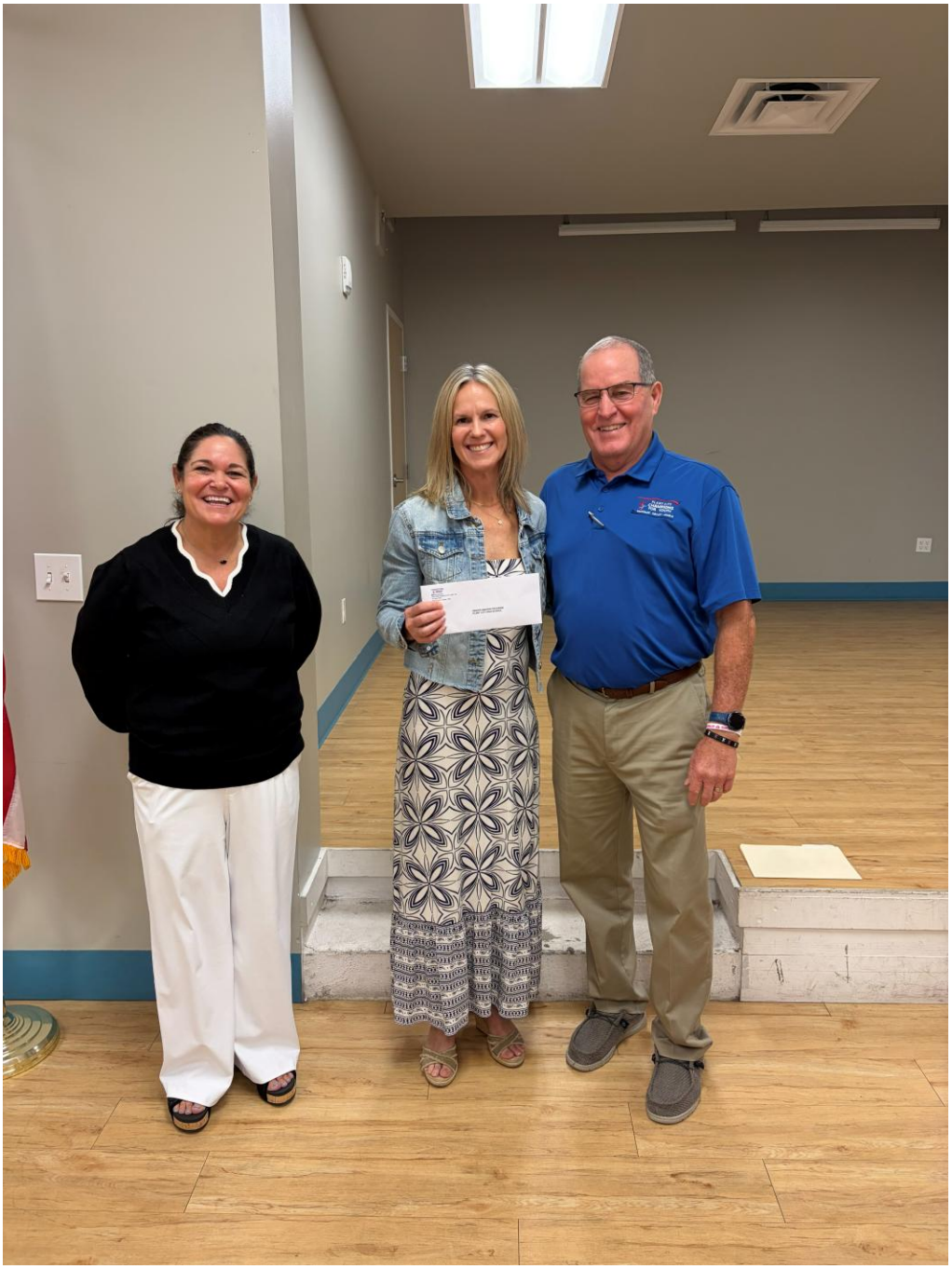
High res photos are attached to the e-mail as well as a copy of their award bios.

Photos courtesy Plant City Champions for Youth



Left to right: Jeb Hicks, Plant City Champions for Youth President; Melanie Moctezuma-Garcia; Yosgart Martinez; Riley Myers; Noah Stanley; Jett Scaglione; Samantha Raines; Mike Witchoskey, Youth Excellence Awards Chair; Kate Solomon. (Not pictured: Maliq Williams)

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Left to right: Plant City High School Principal Traci Durrance; Plant City High School College & Career Counselor Aimee Solomon; Plant City Champions for Youth President Jeb Hicks. A check for $500 was presented to Plant City High School for the annual Senior Awards Ceremony in the spring.

Student bios follow…..

Yosgart Martinez-Ramirez is the son of Leticia Ramirez and Humberto Martinez. Yosgart has been playing completive soccer for Club Santos since 10th grade where he plays as left wing. He is an active member of Youth Alive, National Honor Society, and Latin Quarters. He is a musician and enjoys playing the guitar and singing. He had a solo performance in the school's Hispanic Heritage program this year playing and singing a traditional cultural song. Outside of school, you can find Yosgart working at Hungry Howie's. Upon graduation, he plans to attend Rick Lott Technical School to become an electrician. He also has aspirations of obtaining his real estate license.

Melanie Moctezuma is the daughter of Maria Garcia-Garcia and Juan Espinosa. She has played soccer for PCHS since 10th grade as a defender and is currently serving as the team captain. Melanie is a member of Latin Quarters and Youth Alive. She gives back to local elementary schools by serving as a translator for parents and teachers at conference nights. Upon graduation, Melanie hopes to attend Hillsborough College and then transfer to USF to pursue a degree in Occupational Therapy.

Riley Myers is the daughter of Heather Alexander and Kyle Myers. Riley has never earned a B in her high school career and maintains a perfect 4.0 unweighted GPA. She will earn her Cambridge AICE diploma with merit at graduation. She has been recognized by College Board's National Recognition program and received the Tampa City Council Commendation. Riley holds numerous positions of leadership at the school to include PCHS Speech and Debate club president, Letters for Rose president and PCHS Red Cross president. She is also a member of the Model United Nations club. Outside of school, Riley enjoys volunteering at South Florida Baptist Hospital and Christmas Lane and has worked at Pinch-a-Penny for the last two years. Upon graduation, Riley hopes to attend UCF to pursue a degree in nursing and ultimately plans to become a Physician Assistant.

Samantha Raines is the daughter of Angela and Donald Raines. She is a tri-star athlete at PCHS where she competes in track and field, softball, and volleyball. Earlier this year, she was recognized as athlete of the week for her performance in volleyball by the Plant City Observer. She serves as captain of both the track and field and softball teams. She placed 2nd in the state in high school javelin and received 1st place at Nationals in javelin for AAU. She is also an active member of Interact, Student Government, and Youth Alive clubs at school. In addition to her school commitments, she enjoys volunteering as a pre-k helper at Faith Lighthouse Church and Special Smiles Day at the Florida Strawberry Festival. Upon graduation, Samantha hopes to attend a 4 year university to study Business and Marketing.

Jett Scaglione is the son of Kimberly and Schuyler Scaglione. He played basketball for PCHS for three years, serving as captain one of those years and was the recipient of the Coach's Award. He is also a member of the PCHS golf team. Jett has numerous leadership positions in school clubs and is currently serving on the leadership team for Youth Alive, Interact, and Pickleball. He also enjoys his time as a member of Raider Buddies. Outside of school you'll find him serving as a student leader for the Revive Youth Group, working at Johnson's BBQ, and refereeing for the City of Plant City youth sports teams. Upon graduation, Jett plans to attend Hillsborough College and then transfer to UCF to study Accounting and hopes to pursue an accounting related career.

Kate Solomon is the daughter of Aimee Solomon and Steve Solomon. She has been a PCHS swimmer since freshman year and was awarded the Raider Pride award by her coach. She is the PCHS senior class representative for Superintendent Van Ayres Advisory Council, and she has served on the PCHS Principal's Advisory Council for four years. She is the Vice President of the National Honor Society and a member of the Senior Council, Youth Alive, Key Club, and American Sign Language Honors Society. Kate is very active in the Plant City FFA and has held numerous officer positions including vice president, parliamentarian, sentinel, and leadership team. She enjoys showing sheep and swine throughout Florida including the Hillsborough County Fair and Florida Strawberry Festival. Outside of school, she serves on the youth leadership team at First Baptist Church Plant City and works at Hey Sister and Co in downtown Plant City. Upon graduation, Kate hopes to attend Florida Gulf Coast University to major in nursing with plans to become a labor and delivery nurse

Noah Stanley is the son of Lisa Fairbert and Jamie Stanley. He has been a member of the National Honor Society, Interact Club, and Student Government. Noah is a former PCHS football player and you can now find him on the track for both the cross country and track and field teams. Noah has logged over 100 community service hours with various organizations including the Florida Strawberry Festival. Last year he was the recipient of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Rising Stars scholarship. Upon graduation, Noah will earn the Cambridge AICE diploma and hopes to attend Florida State University to major in Business Finance. It is his goal to own his own business one day.

Maliq Williams is the son of Danielle Gray and Melvin Williams. Maliq is the drum major of our Raider Regiment marching band. He has been a member of the concert, jazz, and marching bands since freshman year and is currently performing at a concert tonight. He has been honored as a recipient of Tri-State Band, a two time recipient of All State Band and a five time recipient of All County Band. He has received nine solo and ensemble superior ratings playing the trombone and euphonium. In addition to his involvement in all things musical, he is also a member of the National Honor Society and the Science National Honor Society. He is an active member of his church youth group where he serves as President. Outside of school, you can find him working at Chick-fil-a. Upon graduation, Maliq plans to attend FSU to obtain a degree in Electrical Engineering and Music Performance and one day hopes to become an engineer while continuing his love of music by playing in a community band.