



Perris Press Release

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Perris High School Student Honored as Volunteer of the Year

A Perris High School senior who has donated 1,000 hours of her time at City functions was named the 2011 Volunteer of the Year at the Volunteer and Sponsor Awards Dinner Show and banquet last week.

Margarita Sanchez, 17, participated in every single event the City of Perris put on in its Centennial year in 2011, from Snow Day in January to the Christmas Parade in mid-December.

She sets up booths, tables, chairs at special events and works as an assistant in the City gym. When events conclude, she's there to take down the same booths and tables she set up earlier.

"I like helping out," Sanchez said. "Seeing other people happy makes me happy."

Sanchez, who did not know she was being honored until her name was called out, was noticeably uncomfortable when Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and members of the City Council invited her to take center stage during the awards presentations. Sanchez received a plaque, a bouquet of flowers and a crown along with the congratulations of the crowd of several hundred.

"I was kind of embarrassed but at the same time I was happy," she said of the accolades.

Sanchez was one of dozens of volunteers, civic groups and businesses honored for their support of City programs. Without the financial and personal support of hundreds of selfless people, Perris could not organize and present the wide variety of programs available to City residents.

"We know the benefit of all the work you do and we all support it," Busch said. "You provide wonderful service to the City and save us thousands of dollars a year. Without your support we might not be able to do all that we do. I want to welcome you here and I want to thank you on behalf of the City for all the volunteer work that you do."

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers said the City is fortunate to have "an abundance of volunteers who give unselfishly of their time and talent."

"We pay these folks nothing for their labor and they do make a big difference in our City," Landers said.

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers praised volunteers and sponsors for their "time, energy and dedication to make the City of Perris a better community." She called the annual awards ceremony one of the best events of the year, one she is proud in which to participate.

"While we can't afford to pay volunteers for what they are worth, the least we can do is to recognize them," Rogers said. Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans—who along with her husband, Iral, was recognized for their volunteer work on behalf of the City—said providing volunteers with an attaboy gives them motivation to continue their unselfish work.

"We're very lucky to have such a great volunteer community," Evans said.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said the appreciation dinner and awards represent a token of the City's appreciation.

"You see our volunteers everywhere," he said. "They do it because they care and want to make a difference. We have a tremendous volunteer base. This ceremony is truly just a token of our appreciation."

Perris officials noted that Sanchez spent several hours the day before the awards ceremony ironing tablecloths used in the appreciation dinner. She wanted to make them look more attractive and inviting.

Mayor Busch said "it is sometimes hard to explain how dedicated some people are," adding that Sanchez was motivated by a desire "to make things look a little bit nicer."

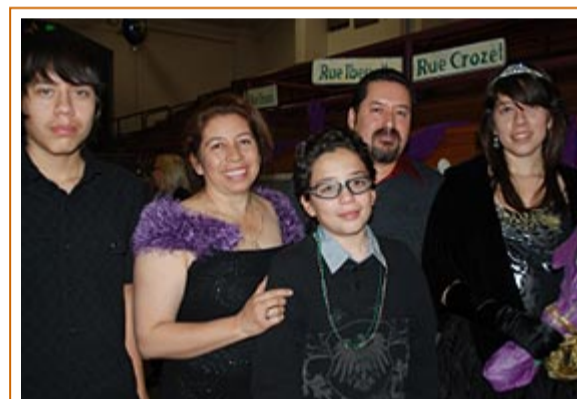
Sanchez's parents, Jose and Rosa Sanchez, beamed when she was honored.

"We are happy for her and so proud," Rosa Sanchez said.

As the evening wound down, Margarita Sanchez went back to doing what she most enjoys: helping out. She picked up cups and glasses from tables and returned them to the kitchen for clean-up.



Perris High School senior Margarita Sanchez, 17, is honored as the City's Volunteer of the Year. She is flanked by Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans.



Margarita Sanchez with her family: brother Josue, 15; mother, Rosa; father, Jose and brother, Eric, 11.



After the ceremony, Margarita Sanchez changed back into her work clothes and cleaned tables.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch addresses the audience at the annual appreciation ceremony, where the theme was Mardi Gras: "We know the work (volunteers) do and we support it."