



News Release

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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CHARLESTON AFB MILITARY CHILD WINS STATE AWARD

CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C. – Edison Velez, a third-grade student at Lambs Elementary School, North Charleston, S.C., received the Governor’s Citizenship Medal in a ceremony April 12.

South Carolina Governor Jim Hodges presented the medal to the son of Master Sgt. Edison Velez, 437th Operations Group, at the South Carolina State House in Columbia.

“I’m very proud to win the award,” said the younger Velez.

The third grader was quick to note he doesn’t participate in programs just to win awards.

“It makes me feel good, helping other people,” he said.

His father said the award wasn’t something the family expected, but was well-deserved and a great recognition of all the student does both at school and in the community.

“We were really ecstatic,” the elder Velez said. “We didn’t know it was coming. It came as a complete surprise. He works so hard and tries his best at everything he puts his mind to.”

According to Hodges’ Web-site, the purpose of the award is to recognize students who demonstrate that citizenship encompasses service and responsibility to their communities, and also to provide incentive for the youth of South Carolina to incorporate the qualities of good citizenship in their daily lives.

According to Nicole Reynolds, the facilitator for the social skills cadre at Lambs, the state gave a list of very general criteria, leaving the development of more specific requirements up to participating schools.

“We sent letters out to the staff early in the school year,” Reynolds said. “We asked them to use not only grades, but character, responsibility and how they use their life skills when choosing their candidate.”

Reynolds said the social skills cadre also asked staff members to take notice of what their students were doing throughout the year.

“We wanted them to be aware of kids who participate in after-school activities year-round,” she said.

When the school’s staff members submitted their nominations, Reynolds said she and the rest of the social skills cadre sat down and read all of the recommendations while deliberating on a school winner. That’s when they chose Edison.

“He’s very well-rounded,” Reynolds said. “He’s also a positive role model for his peers. His teacher said he always did his personal best. He was hands down the obvious choice because he’s such an actively involved young man.”

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