

Oscar Medina IV

TEEA 2013 Winner: Youth



Oscar Medina may be only 11 years old, but already he's a natural leader whose passion for the environment has inspired his entire hometown of Laredo. Oscar doesn't let his visual impairment or physical challenges slow his efforts to lead fellow citizens in doing their part to clean and beautify Laredo. Just a few minutes of Oscar's contagious smile and enthusiasm is enough to convince any neighbor or acquaintance that one person truly can make a difference.

Motivated by his interest in helping the Keep Laredo Beautiful organization with its public awareness efforts, Oscar's parents helped him establish his own nonprofit group called Oscar's Clean Up Club. Oscar's and his club's goals are to clean Laredo's river and creeks, plant trees and gardens, and teach children and their parents to recycle because littering is just plain wrong. KLB arranged for Oscar to meet a local city councilman to gain his support for the club's cleanup plans.

Oscar's Clean Up Club received its nonprofit status in September 2011, and club members immediately started holding fundraising events to cover costs for future activities. Oscar serves as president of the club while rallying the community to volunteer for its activities. During 2012, Oscar and the club held 28 events in Webb County including 18 cleanups that collected more than 20,000 pounds of trash and seven tire collections that removed 1,068 waste tires weighing nearly 39,000 pounds. Oscar's Clean Up Club volunteers built and planted a preschool vegetable garden and planted more than 450 trees, developed a butterfly garden, and planted 30 pounds of wildflower seeds. The club has also hosted six educational booths at local festivals.

Oscar is no stranger to awards and accolades. His passion and hard work recently garnered him first place in Keep Texas Beautiful's Ruthie Jackson Youth Leadership Award in the elementary age division. He also received the coveted Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Service

Benefitting Local Communities. Oscar was one of only five community volunteers nationwide to win this award.

Oscar leads by example. He's a true inspiration as he creates a change that positively impacts Laredo's environment.