

Middle School Winner: **Benjamin Elliot**,
Saint Mary School, Ridgefield

Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest Submission

"I realized very early the power of food to evoke memory, to bring people together, to transport you to other places, and I wanted to be a part of that." -

José Andrés

José Andrés, a famous chef and hero to many who immigrated to the United States in 1991, is the founder of World Central Kitchen (WCK), an organization dedicated to helping people by providing restaurant-quality meals to individuals in devastating situations, including the aftermath of hurricanes, wildfires, and other major disasters. No matter the situation or how devastated the area is, Mr. Andrés and his team have greatly supported first responders, police officers, firefighters, soldiers, and doctors affected by whatever situation they're helping with. On numerous occasions, Mr. Andrés has led his team to prepare millions of meals for people in need worldwide. His unique cooking skills unite people and create lasting memories by spreading kindness, warm meals, and joy when most needed.

José Andrés inspires adults and kids by showing them what hard work and kindness look like and encouraging them to use their talents for the greater good. As a Latino, I think that Mr. Andrés has also positively impacted our community through his humanitarian work and has introduced the world to his own culture and heritage through his dishes inspired by his Spanish roots. Mr. Andrés has also brought attention to the rights of immigrants and Latino workers in the food industry. I believe his work shows commitment to his passion for helping others in the community.

In my school, we recite the following saying daily: *Have Faith, Work Hard, and Shine Bright*. I truly believe that Mr. Andrés embodies all of these qualities. I am truly inspired by the work that José Andrés continues to do, and I hope that one day I can give back to those who are in need, similar to how Mr. Andrés has done for others worldwide.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MY OFFICE :

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