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# The next generation of pet owners have lessons of their own

**MIAMI (June 01, 2017)** — On Wednesday, May 31, 2017, fifty-three Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) students from elementary through high school, their teachers and parents gathered in the lobby of Miami-Dade County Animal Services' Pet Adoption and Protection Center (Animal Services) lobby for the 22$^{nd}$ **HOPE** (Help Overcome Pet Euthanasia) Contest Awards Ceremony.

The HOPE Contest Awards is a countywide initiative founded by School Board Member, Dr. Martin S. Karp approved by the MDCPS District Contest Committee for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Working in collaboration with Animal Services and the Humane Society of Greater Miami (HSGM), the contest teaches responsible pet ownership and care to the next generation of pet owners.

Students are required to develop innovative campaigns to help raise awareness about our roles as the stewards of domestic animals. This year, students were asked to develop messages about preventing and reporting animal cruelty. The judges, from Animal Services and the HSGM, had a difficult time selecting the winning entries because there were so many outstanding projects.

A total of 583 students participated in teams with over 103 project submissions and 53 winning students. The winning school teams, teachers and classes are:

**Elementary School Team Division**

1$^{st}$ Place:  Eugenia B. Thomas K-8 Ctr. / Mrs. Yvette Perozo

2$^{nd}$ Place: Eugenia B. Thomas K-8 Ctr. / Mrs. Yvette Perozo

**Elementary School Class Division**

Spanish Lake Elem / Ms. S. Wallen & Ms. J. Meneses

**Middle Team Division**

1$^{st}$ Place: NSE/Sunny Isles Beach K-8 / Ms. Shannon Green

2$^{nd}$ Place: Highland Oaks Middle / Ms. Daicy Gonzalez

**High School Team Division**

1$^{st}$ Place: Dr. Michael M. Krop Sr. & NWSA / Ms. Russell

2$^{nd}$ Place: A & T Mourning Sr. / Ms. Diallo

"These awards are a great way to engage our future pet parents in discovering the challenges and helping to realize the constant need for life-saving solutions," said Alex Muñoz Director of Animal Services. "The student submissions were all great and we are very proud to be a part of this effort," he added.

View photos of the event.

For more information, visit www.miamidade.gov/animals or call 3-1-1.

**About Miami-Dade County Animal Services**

Every year Animal Services provides care and refuge for 28,000 to 30,000 unwanted dogs and cats. Every day Animal Services staff and volunteers work diligently to find life-long homes for these abandoned animals by facilitating onsite adoptions, hosting off-site adoptions at events and locations throughout the community, and working collaboratively with over 100 rescue organizations and partners that have helped us meet our goal of a 90 percent save rate.

**About Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the fourth largest school district in the United States, comprised of 392 schools, 345,000 students and over 40,000 employees. Located at the southern end of the Florida peninsula, the school district stretches over 2,000 square miles of diverse and vibrant communities ranging from rural and suburban to urban cities and municipalities. A truly global community, district students speak 56 different languages and represent 160 countries.

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*To request materials in accessible format, sign language interpreters, and/or any accommodation to participate in any County-sponsored program or meeting, please call Michael Garateix, 305-418-7157 or email, garatmi@miamidade.gov, five days in advance to initiate your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service).*

## Animal Services

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