

Students applying for the Raytown Community Pride Scholarship are asked to reflect on why they are proud of their Raytown Consolidated School District education.

Quotes from RHS and RSHS Community Pride applicants 2021 (24 essays)

“I fell in love with the independence that surrounded the Raytown District. As a community we always support each other; it was comforting to know that the sky was the limit. I love how every student has access to the school’s resources and people in power.”

“Education to me means versatility in our mindsets, so we can understand that it’s not only about what we learn, but how we use what we’ve learned for the greater good.”

Sirneh Asangwe

“There is an old saying, ‘Home is where the heart is.’ Well, I feel as if I have two homes - the home with my mom, dad, and brother and my home away from home, The Raytown School District. From all of my home room teachers, the counselors, lunch ladies, and specials teachers, I look back fondly and smile. I learned respect, kindness, acceptance as well as getting an education. I felt as if I was valued.”

Emily Atkins

“I have always taken advanced classes, but that did not mean I was confident enough; however, I am voluntarily taking AP Stats when I could have avoided math. This is directly attributed to my teacher.”

Madisen Berry

“As a member of Jaycrew, an exclusive board of leaders within Student Council, I collaborate with a variety of diverse individuals every day. Together, we’ve learned how to address issues as a team, which is a necessary skill in the workforce that I’m proud to have learned in school. . . .Lead4Change . . .is a program where we design our own community service event; we use different techniques to learn how to create and execute our specific goals. We’re one of the only schools in the state to participate in this program, and through these opportunities, I’ve developed healthy approaches to making and pursuing goals.”

Rianna Ellis

“I take pride in the overall atmosphere of our school. The mission ‘*Educate, Independent Thinkers, Empower Productive Citizens, Inspire Life-Long Learners*’ definitely holds merit in the day-to-day affairs at Raytown South. My parents never hesitate to remind me how blessed I am to have teachers who are so attentive, knowledgeable, organized, helpful, and committed. They both say that neither of them ever had a teacher as amazing as the ones at Raytown South. Not only do teachers at Raytown South go above and beyond teaching the required curriculum in class, but they are always willing to help outside their designated class blocks.”

Candace Hayes

“In my junior year, I took Chem II. For the first time in my high school career, I struggled to be successful in class. Mr. Steeley reminded me that I was capable of being successful. He pushed

me to be my best - and my best doesn't always have to be absolute perfection 100% of the time. I started to learn from my failures, not just push them away."

Anna Hoffman

"All of my past experiences with school have allowed me to become a well-rounded adult. Being in advanced classes taught me how to deal with stress and work beyond the minimum. Playing sports taught me how to work with others of all skill levels and to step up and be a leader. I feel more than prepared to go out into the world with the knowledge and skills I've honed while in Raytown schools."

Markayla Lottie

"'Puedes ser lo que quieras, si te esfuerzas' translates to you can be anything you want if you put in the work. Those words became my motto as I joined numerous clubs my freshman year. Today, I am only weeks away from leaving the Raytown School District, but the memories, friendships, and goals will always stay with me. I have become proud of the person I have become . . . I will put in the work as my parents told me to, but this time I have a ladder that Raytown provided me."

Johnathon Martinez

"August 2010, the beginning of my journey with the Raytown School District. It was second grade and I was the shy new girl. To my surprise, I was welcomed with open arms from not only staff members, who were more than willing to help with this transition, but by the students as well. I joined in games of pretend on the playground and conversations about our favorite shows at lunch. That year I was also invited to join Challenge, a program for Raytown students who have been identified as gifted. . . we didn't have any programs similar at my previous school. I went from being bored in my everyday class to being interested. . . Raytown saw something in me that others schools didn't."

"During my high school career, I have had the privilege of being surrounded by passionate goal-driven staff members. Two of the most impactful individuals have been my Student Council advisor and my National Honor Society advisor. They have taught me the importance of being challenged."

Madison Puhl

"My high school experience has helped form me into a goal-oriented adult by always helping me get better in everything I do. I have never been the student to give up or fail a class. I feel like this is because my teachers have always helped push me and help me create a growth mindset so I can always remain a goal-oriented student and person."

Emily Sadler

"My family isn't originally from Raytown. My parents were born and raised in a small town in Mexico. The town isn't poor or dangerous; it simply did not offer the big bright future my parents were looking for their children.

. . . Various groups for Hispanic parents have benefited my family. In one of those groups, my mom learned about a local church that offered English classes, and she went as far as taking college-level English classes fulfilling the reason she came to the U.S. in the first place. It is said

that you are a product of where you grow up, and I am proud to say I grew up in Raytown because this environment has made me the confident and ambitious person I am today.”

Daniela Saenz-Quintana

“I never believed in the ideas that when you are born, you are destined for something. I just figured you found something you’d like, and you stuck with it until you didn’t. By the time I was a junior in high school in the middle of a global pandemic, I realized that I was incredibly incorrect. After spending countless hours watching C-SPAN footage of black folks getting killed, new recordings of how the pandemic was affecting low-income areas, and learning about how damaging policies have harrowing effects on communities that looked the most like me, I knew my heart, my soul, my body, my time, and my energy was destined into working in urban areas to fix public policies that are holding black, brown, queer, poor, and neurodivergent communities down. I know I’m up for the job because of my time at Raytown.”

Presley Stewart

“I’m Mexican but couldn’t speak my mother language well enough to communicate with people. . . .couldn’t understand words written in a Spanish book no matter how long I stared, and my hand only had the ability to write in English. Those facts made me feel ashamed. My family tried to teach me, but it would not stick, but in the 8th grade the opportunity to take Spanish came along. I have learned so much from señorita, a lady who would not respond unless you spoke in Spanish.”

Katie Valdovinos

“The advanced coursework I have taken with RQS has kept me on the edge of my abilities. . . . Studies at Lee’s Summit Tech gave a more advanced framework for career level exploration, studies that have cemented my plans for the future.”

“Covid has been something of a crucible, . . . and I have found my standing in the heat of that crucible, now stronger than I ever was before.”

Antonia Waltermate

“I used to consider myself as a shy person who would always second guess herself, a person who would stay away from new things because she wasn’t sure what would happen. Now, I would describe myself as a person who is a leader, a captain, and who is proud of herself, a person who will make decisions out of confidence rather than fear. I have always considered myself as a hard worker who strives to be the best and that has, and never will change.”

Cecily Wells

“. . .GSA and RHS student council have worked together to get rid of gender specific royalty at events such as homecoming, court warming, and prom, and instead replaced it with gender neutral labels to include every one of any gender identify. Both of these groups have helped me to pay attention and have empathy for others and see what else I can do to make a difference in a place as divided as our country.”

Katelyn White

“Playing sports has helped me the most to be more confident in myself and believe that I can achieve something. Sports and school have helped me become a goal oriented adult When running, you have to have a goal in place or you won’t succeed in winning. You have to decide before the race your pace, if you want to win, if you are going to be competitive.”

Dakota Wilber