



Community

DANIA BEACH » FORT LAUDERDALE » HALLANDALE BEACH » HOLLYWOOD » PEMBROKE PARK » WEST PARK

SECTION EDITOR RUBEN CUETO » 954-574-5330 » rcueto@tribune.com

Putting the pedal to the metal

Hallandale students receive bikes as reward for good academics, citizenship

BY SERGY ODIDURO
Staff Writer

A group of students recently got a special surprise at Gulfstream Middle School in Hallandale Beach.

The 27 students received new bicycles as recognition for their academic success and their positive impact in the community.

"I've had straight A's this whole semester," said Ryan Rowe, a sixth-grader who got a purple and yellow

bike and a pink helmet. "It was cool to get it. My bike was sorta old and falling apart."

The students were selected through a program hosted by Impact 4 Good, which worked with the Florida Endowment Foundation for Florida's Graduates to put them in touch with local students.

"Impact 4 Good is a leadership development company," said Heather Beaven, the foundation's CEO. "Their focus is leadership de-

velopment activities that result in a product. Whatever they are building gets donated to a local nonprofit."

Eighth-grader Maria Alaez said her new bike will replace an older one that has a broken chain.

"I was surprised," she said. "I wasn't expecting this at all. ... The color is really pretty. It's also really big, and that's good because I am tall and I can't ride a small bike."

Alaez is a straight-A student who

donates her time to a variety of causes. She's taken part in cancer awareness walks, made care packages for the Jubilee Center of South Broward, and tutored students at Hallandale Beach Elementary School.

Both students said their parents were pleasantly surprised.

"They were proud and happy for me," Rowe said.

"She was so proud of me," Alaez said. "She put the bike in the living

room so everyone can see. Whenever someone comes in, she says, 'Look! Look at what my daughter got in school!'"

Beaven hopes the bicycles will serve as motivation for the students.

"Every time those kids see that bike, they will think that someone believes in them," she said. "Even though there may be times that they may not want to study, it will serve as a visual reminder to be the best that they can be."

Sergy Odiduro can be reached at sodiduro@tribune.com.