

Published June 20th, 2012

## Two JM Students Given Moraga Lions Pride Award

Submitted by Dan Hagan



Back row, from left: past Moraga Lions President Rich Laufenberg, Mark Clifford, Tom Rhoda; front: Joaquin Moraga teacher Kristin Anderson, JM students Michael Clifford and Danielle Rhoda, Tina Rhoda, and new Moraga Lions President Dan Hagan. Photo provided

"Although the academics don't always come easily to her, she remains organized and responsible," she said. "She works tirelessly to stay on top of her work, does the best she can on every assignment and studies hard for tests. It is important that students such as Rhoda be recognized for the effort they give so they learn hard work is valued and pays off. I know she will continue to make great progress over the next two years at JM."

The Moraga Lions recently awarded two Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM) students, Michael Clifford and Danielle Rhoda, with the year's first Moraga Lions Pride Award, which recognizes students at the Intermediate School level for achievement and effort. According to Moraga Lions President Dan Hagan, this is not an award for the best students, but rather an award to give recognition to students that have provided a consistent effort throughout the existing school year to improve their academic achievement.

"Any teacher who has had JM student Michael Clifford as a student would agree there are two things he brings with him each day: his best effort and a smile," said JM teacher Kristen Anderson. "Moraga School District has some of the best and brightest students around; for a student who must overcome some challenges to keep up with this peer group, the day to day homework, studying, and tests can be daunting. However, Clifford never let up. He forged ahead, staying later in class to ask questions or get clarification on assignments," she said. "And he did it with a positive attitude and tenacity that isn't always found in middle school students. He's a great example to all of us, and these qualities will take him far in life. We wish him all the best as he moves on to high school."

Anderson added that JM student Danielle Rhoda is the kind of student any teacher would be thrilled to have.

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[back](#)

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