

## Saratoga County Starts Character Awareness Program

The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors is initiating a “Character First Program” to promote civility, improve trust and good character in our communities, businesses, government and our lives. Guiding the County will be Jay C. Rifenburg of Rifenburg Training and Development of Saratoga Springs. Jay has conducted presentations globally on the importance of core values, accountability, integrity, personal honesty and other character traits in business, education and government. He is also a columnist and author of three books with his new release being “Return To Your Core – Principles for a Purposeful and Respected Life”

Each month in 2014, the County will be inviting a student from a local school district to write an essay on different character traits, such as duty, courage, respect, trust, and tolerance.

The student will address why the character trait is important and the personal and civic benefits associated when applying that trait, as well as the consequences when that trait is violated.

***Duty --- a moral commitment to fulfill a mission without considering self-interest.***

***Courage --- the internal strength to confront danger or intimidation and to act rightly in the face of popular opposition or discouragement.***

***Respect – courteous action or deference for something that is good, valuable or important.***

***Trust --- a firm belief and reliance on the honesty, integrity, strength, ability and surety of a person.***

***Tolerance --- a willingness to respect feelings, opinions, behavior or beliefs that are different from your own.***

The essay offers the student opportunities to not only showcase their writing skills and depth of understanding but to speak before the County Board of Supervisors on the specific character trait at its monthly meeting.

Following the presentation, the essay will be submitted by the County Board to the Daily Gazette where it will be published, one each month from a different school throughout the year.

Saratoga County invites all to display our good character -- write about it; discuss it in homes and businesses and promote the “better angels of our nature” in 2014.

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***Courtesy: Saratoga County Board of Supervisors.***