



Exceptional Youth
By Karen Wilson

"Honestly, I believe that my own motivation is due to the village I came from, a supportive family, having parents who have exposed me to so many opportunities."



Alana Smith

Alana Smith signed onto a personal statement when she was a freshman in high school at Natomas Charter School's Performing and Fine Arts Academy (PFAA): "We are beyond things. As an individual you are beyond limitations, negativity and haters and because you are beyond those things, you can achieve beyond achievement, reach beyond opportunities, and be beyond things." When she graduates next year, that statement will be the motto for the 2020 graduating class.

Alana was the first student to be elected to four executive Associated Student Body positions, working her way from Secretary to Treasurer, Vice President, and in her senior year she will serve as President. She is the student liaison for the Natomas Charter Board of Directors. She says the experience has helped her to build relationships with peers in middle and high school, and to gain and exhibit leadership qualities.

This year Alana put those leadership qualities to work founding a non-profit, Beyond Umbrellas, Inc. The idea came

from her mother Chanel Stafford's experience as a volunteer at Pacific Elementary School. "A coordinator at the school told my mother that many kids were absent due to the heavy rains," Alana says. "That sparked the idea to help them get to school so that they would have the opportunity to learn and succeed." Beyond Umbrellas donated 150 umbrellas last March, and still has sponsor interest to keep the program going, with umbrella drives in August and September for donation events in October and/or November, focused on underserved schools. Dates will be posted on her web and Instagram sites.

Alana gave herself the nickname Scholar Billionaire in eighth grade, and says it represents her current efforts to learn, and the future, in which she sees herself with an abundant life. She has been active in the Sacramento chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. for six years, and will be in San Diego this summer at its Regional Teen Conference, where she will run for Regional Teen President (she is currently Treasurer) and take

part in an oratorical competition. Her public speaking experience began when she was 12, at then-Mayor Kevin Johnson's State of the City address. That experience led to speaking at an event for civil rights icon Andrew Young, among many other speaking engagements where her message is motivating young people to become the best version of themselves.

"Honestly, I believe that my own motivation is due to the village I came from, a supportive family, having parents who have exposed me to so many opportunities. They believe in me. Now there are people who look up to me, so that also contributes to my motivation."

Alana plans to attend college and major in fine arts with a concentration in drama, and a minor in business, with a career goal of being an actress and entrepreneur.

Learn more:

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(above) Alana Smith attended the Disney Dreamers Academy at Disneyland.