



MIKE FASANO
TAX COLLECTOR
PASCO COUNTY FLORIDA

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Greg Giordano (727) 847-8179

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Pasco Tax Collector Mike Fasano Announces Winner of Middle School Essay Contest

Pasco County Tax Collector Mike Fasano, as part of **Clerk & Comptroller Paula O' Neill's** Constitutional Officers Essay Contest, announces that his office received 290 essays from middle school students throughout Pasco County. Students from public, private, parochial, charter, online and home schools all entered the contest, which ran during the month of March. The entrants, students in Grades 6-8, were asked to answer the question *"Do you think taxes are too high or too low? Why?"*

A panel of judges, not knowing the age, gender, grade or school of each entrant, chose the essay written by **Gabriel Quinn**, a student at *Saint Anthony's Catholic School* in San Antonio, as the winning submission. **Gabriel's** essay best communicated his response to the topic question all while meeting the contest criteria of overall essay

structure, appearance and readability. A copy of **Gabriel's** essay is attached.

"I am very proud of all the students who participated in this essay contest," states **Tax Collector Mike Fasano**. "With 290 well-written essays to choose from, the judges had a fun but difficult task to perform. With so many excellent entries to read, narrowing the choices down to one overall winner was a tough call the panel had to make. However, **Gabriel Quinn's** essay stood out as the clear choice among many excellent entries. I would also like to thank **Sister Alice Ottapurackal** and her staff for encouraging the students to participate in the contest."

Gabriel Quinn was awarded a \$300 Best Buy gift card at a ceremony held at *Saint Anthony's Catholic School* in San Antonio on April 27, 2016. School principal **Sister Alice Ottapurackal** was on hand to introduce **Tax Collector Mike Fasano** as well as **Gabriel Quinn** and his family. The prize was awarded to **Gabriel** before an assembly of his peers (see photo attached). All entrants in the contest received a personal letter from **Tax Collector Mike Fasano** thanking them for their participation in the contest.

The Pasco County Tax Collector's office plans on participating in the essay contest again in 2017. Students who did not win this year may have the opportunity to enter again during the next school year if they are still in middle school. Additionally, the student essay contest is just one of many community-related events the Pasco County Tax Collector's Office participates in throughout the year. For more details about next year's contest or other upcoming promotions and activities coordinated by the tax collector's office, please do not hesitate to contact **Greg Giordano, Director of Customer Relations** at 727-847-8179 or visit www.pascotaxes.com