

SUMMARIES OF PAST ANTHONY BRUCIA SUCCESS AWARD WINNERS

- 1. I left a neighborhood in Richmond, CA where there were shootings almost every night. I was in middle school and already hanging with a bad group of guys. We were always getting into trouble and doing illegal things. I was flunking all my classes and spending my summers in summer school. Finally, my mother moved us to a small town in the San Joaquin valley near my aunt and uncle's home. When I started high school everyone was so nice. To blend in I had to join sports and clubs. My aunt and uncle helped me and I was no longer a "gangstra." Oh, and I am now planning to go to college!***
- 2. My mom and dad were drug ay addicts. I missed a lot of days in school as I had to babysit my little sister. One she and I were put into foster care. We each had different foster mothers, but we lived near each other. My new foster mother gave me lots of help by making me go to school and doing my homework. At school my counselor would actually talk to me! Whenever she saw me, she always gave me a pep talk. All of a sudden I wanted to succeed and I believed I could. And I did!***
- 3. I came to the U.S. as a 14 year old who could not speak any English. I worked in the fields with my parents until a social worker "discovered" me. She told my parents I had to go to school. When I enrolled at Mendota High School I saw that everyone looked like me. Many of the students were also learning English. Others were good at English. I joined the Chess team as I was good at it and it didn't require English. By the time I was a senior and with the help of my ESL teachers I was able to pass the graduation test! Next year I am going to Fresno City College.***
- 4. I was a real mess in school and in home. I was always sneaking out and getting into trouble. My parents tried to guide me into the right direction, but I was always a follower.....and I followed the wrong guys. At school, with my parents insistence, I got assigned a "mentor." With my luck, it was a city council member! One day he even got me out of juvenile hall. He was a nice guy and would listen to me a lot. Needless to say, he got me into wrestling and between him and the coach I really turned it around. I learned to never give up, no matter how often I made a mistake. I will graduate this June.***
- 5. It is hard to believe, but with the help of an Ag Teacher I turned it around. I always thought Ag students were jerks. But then again, I was a "smart ass" who was going nowhere. Then my counselor put me in an Ag Math class as there***

were no openings in the regular math class. One day, after class, I wandered into the welding shop and saw a student welding. She (yes, it was a girl just like me) asked me to help and soon I was hooked. But I had to work hard after the Ag teachers "recruited me. Now I am an expert welder and already have a job offer.

- 6. I don't know why, but I never liked school after the 6th grade. I had trouble doing math and English and was only successful in city league soccer. I sort of had a chip on my shoulder. My younger brother is even smarter and more successful (he gets better grades) than me. When I turned 16 I transferred to continuation high school. The classes were small and all of a sudden the teachers took an interest in me. I started reading and became good on computers. Our school even had a soccer team in the city league. I started to look at things differently and it just seemed that my whole world changed. I have been accepted into the Air Force and will join up two months after I graduate this June.*

Note: *These summaries are intended to give the applicant an example of some of the adversity a few past winners have gone through. We have also had winners who have overcome serious illnesses or physical disabilities; resource students who have enjoyed great success; students who were once addictive to drugs; and students who were abused at an earlier age. The actual essays are usually 1-2 pages long. We have noticed that most winners have had the support of another person; perhaps a relative, mentor, teacher, parent or friend. Our applicants and winners are both male and female and of all races.*

It is recommended that the applicant have someone review their essay for clarity and grammar. Sometimes, rewording a sentence can give our readers a better picture of you.