



**ERIN
HARREL**

of Cape Coral has a Ph.D in education and is the mother of three children.

Citizenship Award

Teaching children strong **community values**

Recently, our 11-year-old Jude came home from school beaming. His teacher, Mrs. Kilfoyle, had chosen Jude to receive the Citizenship Award. By standard definition, the Citizenship Award is given in schools for outstanding service, leadership, responsibility, character and discipline. Jude was elated with being given this honor. My husband, Greg, and I couldn't have been more proud.

As parents, we stress to our children the importance of giving back to the community and constantly stress the importance of being a leader.

Kids are faced with some pretty tough decisions these days. When someone is mocking a fellow student, friend or teacher, it's not easy to be the kid who says, "Knock it off," or walks away. A child's reputation is as important to him as financial security is to an adult. Obviously, Jude has made some pretty positive choices in his career as a kid.



Special to SWFL Parent & Child

Jude with his Citizenship Award certificate

Further evidence of his altruistic character emerged when he and his sisters, Maggie and Riley, were asked to lead the Fallen Officers Memorial ceremony on May 11 at the Fort Myers Police Department. It was an overwhelming honor to participate in the


memorialization of citizens who have given so selflessly to serve and protect our community.

In the unpredictable and bizarre world we live in, it is every parent's job to teach children strong community and leadership skills through disci-

pline and character-building. Research shows that this vital role is often left to teachers, schools and community organizations, such as churches, the YMCA and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

Greg and I couldn't be more proud of Jude's many good deeds. As his teacher put it, "He's just a neat kid." Jude's accomplishments remind us that those who offer their lives to serve and protect the citizens of our nation do not do so in vain.

The following fallen officers of our community represent the importance of fostering strong moral and ethical values that promote leadership, responsibility, character, discipline and community service: Lt. Matthew G. Hisler, Sgt. Logan L. Scott, Det. Mark Alan Bolhouse, Officer Daniel Matthew Starks, Officer Phillip C. Lebid and Officer Andrew Widman.

It is our duty as parents to ensure we are guiding our children to be great citizens! 

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