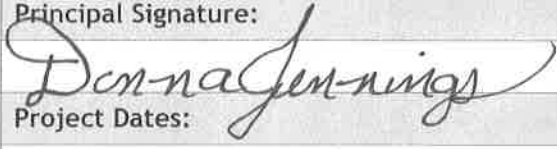




**TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS
TASC TOP TEN PROJECTS COMPETITION**

HIGH SCHOOL

ENTRY COVER SHEET

School Name:	School UIL Classification:
White Oak	3A
School Address:	Size of Community:
200 S White Oak Rd	6,364
City/State:	Zip:
White Oak, Texas	75693
School Phone:	School Fax:
903-291-2001	903-291-2034
Advisor Name:	Advisor E-Mail:
Kim Taylor	taylork@woisd.net
Principal Name:	Principal Signature:
Donna Jennings	
Project Name:	Project Dates:
Olivia's Forever Smile	5/17 & 1/22-26/18
Total Number of Students in Council:	Number of Members Involved in Project:
70	50
Total Number of Students Enrolled in School:	Number of Other Students Involved in Project:
405	700
Total Number of Faculty Enrolled in School:	Number of Faculty Involved in Project:
45	85
Number of Community Groups Involved in Project:	Number of Community Members Involved in Project:
4	25

THIS INFORMATION MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE.

Top Ten entries must be submitted by **FEBRUARY 13, 2018**

This application must be submitted online via the TASC website.
Upload your photos, newspaper articles, etc. online as well. Scan all pages into one document and upload.

Please consider presenting a table talk (HS) on your project! You must apply to do that.

Project Title: *Olivia's Forever Smile* - White Oak High School

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES: Our mission is to help a fellow student, Oliva Hale, in financial need during two smile surgeries in St. Louis, Missouri. Olivia was born with a rare-progressive craniofacial/ neurological disorder called Moebius Syndrome (pronounced mow-bee-us,) meaning she cannot smile, frown, wink or whistle.

DESCRIPTION: Olivia's Forever Smile project has consisted of many parts. Our council, along with the student body and faculty to support this cause. After Olivia's doctors approved her for surgery, the council decided to raise awareness for Moebius Syndrome and conduct fundraisers to assist in financial needs. In May of 2017, teachers purchased \$20 pass to wear jeans for the month. The district had overwhelming success and raised \$3,500. This year, Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day fell on January 24, so each campus planned a week long theme to raise awareness about the syndrome. At the high school campus, teachers could pay \$10 to wear jeans and students could pay \$5 for a "brain break," which rewarded them with a 30 minute break to eat two slices of pizza and enjoy a soda. At the middle school campus, goodies were brought to create snack baskets. Finally, the elementary campus held a coin war. January 24 is National Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day and the entire district and community wore purple to support Olivia on her first upcoming surgery on January 30th. Our grand total for Olivia was \$9,996.49

DESCRIPTION OF INVOLVEMENT:

- a) **Student Council Members:** organized jean weeks & months, with staff members, organized and ran Brain Break for Olivia, made banners & signs for awareness and organized Moebius Awareness Day, wore purple
- b) **Other Students:** 70% of our high school bought brain break tickets, elementary students held coin wars & dress up days for awareness, Middle School bought snow cones, snacks for baskets, wore purple
- c) **Other Organizations:** Middle School student council organized snacks to make baskets for the family, organized Kona for snow cones, wore purple
- d) **Faculty:** purchased jean passes district wide, donated money and encouraged students to participate and wore purple
- e) **Community:** donated money & wore purple on the Moebius Awareness Day

Raised a grand total of \$9,996.49



WHITE OAK HIGH SCHOOL

200 S. White Oak Rd.
White Oak, Texas 75693
Donna Jennings, Principal



February 7, 2018

Dear Texas Association of Student Councils:

“Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”

~Mother Teresa

A smile is a simple thing. Most of us don't even think twice as we flash those pearly whites at those who make us happy and those we love. But for those born with Moebius Syndrome, a smile is an impossible dream. Moebius Syndrome is a craniofacial/neurological disorder that manifests itself primarily in facial paralysis. Individuals with Moebius syndrome cannot smile or frown, and do not have lateral eye movements. The exact cause of Moebius Syndrome is not known, but it is thought to be related to failure to develop the blood vessels that would normally nourish the facial muscles and nerves, although many theories exist.

All parents wait to see that first smile from their child. For the typical child, this happens when they reach 6 weeks of age. For parents of a child with Moebius Syndrome, this wait can be a lifetime because the child will never outgrow this disability. The child feels the same emotion as all other children, but the facial muscles will not allow the face to move. Moebius children are destined to live life with no facial expression, unless they can come up with thousands of dollars for several surgeries that show promise.

White Oak High School is blessed to have a very special student, Olivia Hale, who has lived her life under the cloud of Moebius Syndrome. Olivia is a freshman who has never let her battle with Moebius Syndrome dampen her spirits. She is an honor student, who is a member of the percussion section in the band, and even won a position on the WOHS flag corp. Her family could not afford the surgery to try to give

Olivia her smile, so she has lived with the condition for 14 years. She never complained and just made the most of every day.

For the 2017 – 2018 school year, the White Oak Student Council chose to focus their efforts on making sure Olivia could have the chance at the life changing surgery, while bringing awareness to this rare condition. With this year's project, "Olivia's Forever Smile," our amazing student council members have once again gone above and beyond to change the lives of those around them.

The "Olivia's Forever Smile" project was made up of several parts, spearheaded by the leaders of the student council. Officers and members spent time educating the students and staff of WOHS through flyers and signs posted throughout the school. They knew that if they could gather enough support from the school and community, Olivia would have a chance to travel to St. Louis for the life changing surgery.

They began their fund-raising efforts in the fall, by selling "jeans certificates" to the teachers and staff of the high school. During this drive, they were able to raise over \$1000 for their cause.

Next, the student council set up a Moebius Awareness Day, in honor of Olivia, where all students and staff were encouraged to wear purple. Video announcements made students aware of the battle faced by Olivia and children like her. The high school had almost 100% participation, and the student council arranged a huge group picture in the gymnasium with all the "purple people" holding a sign in support of Olivia and other Moebius victims. The day was featured on Roughneck Radio and the Derrick Daily announcements. The photo was posted on all social media sites in White Oak ISD, making the community more aware of the condition.

While the White Oak Student Council kept working on ideas to help with funding, Olivia and her family got word that she had been accepted as a candidate for "smile surgery" at St. Louis Children's Hospital in January 2018. This first surgery would take over 12 hours and she and her family would need be there for about 3 weeks. The student council knew they would need to work fast and get as much support as possible in a very short time. They were determined to get as much money to her family as possible before they left for St. Louis.

The student council got every campus at White Oak ISD, as well as the community, focused on their goal. The primary and intermediate schools held coin wars, collecting thousands of dollars for the student council campaign. The middle school collected money and gift cards for the family to use while in St. Louis. The leaders of the student council decided to do a totally new fundraiser at the high school that had never been attempted. They decided to hold a "Brain Break for Olivia." They secured a waiver from the cafeteria and arranged for an afternoon break for the high school students willing to participate. Students would be offered a 30-minute break from 1:45 to 2:15, where they would be served slices of pizza and a drink, and enjoy music and fellowship in the gym. Once again, the fundraiser was featured on the Derrick Daily announcements and on Roughneck Radio. Flyers covered the hallways of the high school. The student council sold tickets to the Brain Break each morning in the main hallway for \$5 each. The students of the high school showed an overwhelming response and about 70% of the student body joined the break. Teachers were offered the chance to wear jeans for the week of the Brain Break for \$10. Through the Brain Break fundraisers, the student council was able to raise \$1700 for Olivia and her family.

Our White Oak Student Council officers and members are caring, compassionate students who are role models for the rest of the student body. They constantly strive to help others and make the world a better place for everyone. A smile is truly the beginning of love. There is no greater love than to help others in their time of need. The White Oak Student Council brings smiles to all of us at WOHS, and through their life changing project, "Olivia's Forever Smile," they have ensured that Olivia will have a smile that will last a lifetime. It is a privilege to witness love in action through the work of the White Oak High School Student Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna Jennings". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Donna Jennings

Principal, White Oak High School

January 29, 2018

Dear Texas Association of Student Councils:

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these sisters of mine, you did for me."
Matthew 25:40

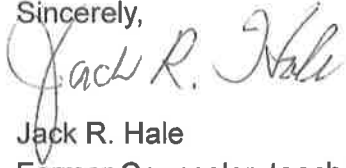
In an effort to build an effective and active organization, the White Oak Student Council and advisor Kim Taylor have developed a great reputation for their strong desire to share hope, support and love whenever they can. Kim strives to teach each member of the Council that these fine human characteristics work together and you can't have one without the other.

In this particular case, the mission of the Student Council was to raise awareness as well as money for a student who was born with Moebius Syndrome, a rare neuromuscular disorder characterized by weakness or paralysis of multiple cranial nerves, most often the 6th and 7th facial nerves. Symptoms include, but are not limited to, the inability to smile, little or no lateral eye movement, severe eye dryness due to the inability to blink, strabismus, difficulty in speaking because of limited lip movement, and weak upper body strength. The student affected is a freshman girl, Olivia Hale, who has attended White Oak Schools since she was three years old. Olivia has undergone multiple eye surgeries to help several eye problems she possesses, has received speech and occupational therapy beginning at age 6 months, and has received extensive hippotherapy at the Windridge Equestrian facility in Upshur County. In recent years, a doctor in Canada has pioneered a special procedure called "Smile Surgery," and this is where Mrs. Taylor and the WOHS Student Council have "stepped up to the plate." Events such as Wear Purple for Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day, January 24, "jeans for teachers," and "Brain Break for Olivia" have already raised nearly \$2000.00 for Olivia's family. These special activities have prompted the Elementary and Middle Schools to get on the bandwagon to support Olivia. The surgery is taking place in St. Louis and will require nearly 11 hours to work on only one side of Olivia's face. The second side will be done in approximately 6 months and then the extensive therapy will begin. During this time, the brain has to be retrained and literally waked up to regain some of the facial muscle movement. Olivia's mother stated at a recent assembly where the check was presented to Olivia, "I have waited 15 years to see my baby smile." Every student and teacher in the audience was deeply moved by this comment. Needless to say, these two surgeries will be grueling and expensive, probably exceeding estimates over \$300,000. Even though the family does have insurance that will greatly help, there will be out of pocket expenses that will also be significant. These school fundraisers will help tremendously to offset many expenses, but the emotional support, encouragement, and prayer efforts are priceless.

Once again, the WOHS Student Council, under the direction of Mrs. Kim Taylor, are to be congratulated for unending efforts to help a fellow student or some other situation on our community where there is a great need. As a 41 year employee of the WOISD, I can state with

no reservation, there is no better Student Council advisor like Mrs. Taylor on the planet. On behalf of Olivia and her family, we simply say "thank you for giving us hope, support and love."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack R. Hale". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Jack R. Hale

Former Counselor, teacher, and administrator of the White Oak Independent School District.
White Oak, Texas





Standing before the high school, Olivia Hale is presented a large check by Principal Donna Jennings at a ceremony in the gym to help pay for her smile surgery on January 30. The student council hosted several events throughout the year, raising a total of \$1,720. "We have done several events for 'Olivia's Forever Smile' including teachers wearing jeans in one fundraiser in the late spring, 'Wear Purple for Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day, and Brain Break for Olivia," student council sponsor Kim Taylor said. photo by haley narvaez

Freshman with Moebius Syndrome prepares for operation

Anna Dusek
Staff Writer

A smile is one of the most common facial expressions a person uses. Most of the time we don't even realize that we are smiling, it just comes naturally. One simple movement can display so much expression, however, sometimes we take expressions for granted.

Moebius Syndrome, which keeps a person from being able to display facial expressions and smile, is a rare disorder that freshman Olivia Hale has dealt with since she was born. However, she still finds a way to display her bright, positive personality which will show on her face for the first time after her surgery last week.

"I have had to have a lot of patience because we started planning this in seventh grade," Hale said. "But my family and community have been so supportive by doing so many fundraisers and donating and have been really helpful."

The high school student council held a fundraising event on Jan. 25 allowing students to take a 30 minute break during seventh period to enjoy two pieces of pizza and a soda. The price to participate was five dollars and all proceeds went to Olivia's surgery.

"The fundraiser that the school did means so much to me," Hale said. "Last year in middle school, they raised \$3,500 which has helped so much getting our travels ready and paying hospital fees and this year is going to be even greater with the high school involved."

The surgery took place in St. Louis, Missouri and lasted 8-12 hours. After the operation, a week in the hospital to recover is required. However, being able to smile for the first time will make everything Olivia has waited for worth it.

"Babies can smile at six months old and here I am being 14 almost 15 and haven't been able to smile ever," Hale said. "But after this surgery I might actually be able to, and I couldn't be more excited."

"These school fundraisers will help tremendously to offset many expenses, but the emotional support, encouragement, and prayer efforts are priceless."

Jack Hale

HAVING A COW

Junior raises heifer

Alex Meaux
Contributing Writer

Everyone has their own passion in life and they vary greatly whether it is in sports, school, or in junior Ryan Denton's case, raising and showing his heifer, Annabelle.

Ryan is a showman for FFA and shows a female Beefmaster, a breed of cow developed through the crossbreeding of Shorthorns, Herefords, and Brahmans.

"I have shown my heifer for about a year now and it all started with my passion for cows," Ryan said. "I told Mrs. Meyers about my interests in them and she was the one who gave me the idea to buy and take care of Annabelle."

At the types of shows Ryan competes at, the cattle are judged based on specific standards like how they look, if they are too thin or too fat, and if they have drank too much water or not enough.

"People may not think it is that competitive, but when you are with that animal longer than you are with your family sometimes, that animal becomes

your family," Ryan said.

Ryan has competed at local competitions, placing 4th in his class at the Gregg county show, also known as Harvest Fest, and has participated in major competitions at Denison and Fort Worth, placing 8th in his class in Fort Worth.

"Ryan works really hard with his animal, and for him to do as good as he did in his class at Fort Worth is really something," animal science teacher Mr. Freeman said.

For the past year, Ryan has been with his cow every day, sometimes waking up at 5 in the morning to take care of her.

"I have to feed her, walk her, clean her stalls, wash her, and comb her hair," Ryan said. "I've devoted more time to Annabelle than I am to school work. I spend at least 4 hours with her every day to take care of her."

Despite the early mornings, all the time and effort has been an invaluable experience for Ryan.

"I am the first person in my family to show and I have kind of been on my own," Ryan said. "It's been difficult, but the bond I've built with Annabelle has made all of my hard work worth it."



On a Facebook post deleted almost a year ago, Ryan began his journey with Annabelle "Today I was blessed to start a new chapter in my life," Ryan said. "Meet Annabelle, a Beefmaster that I will be showing at stock shows coming up in the next few months." The bond between the two has only grown since that day. courtesy photo