

KAMARA

ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

“Hello My name is Kamara Rodriguez. You may know me as the achiever of the year. Thank you for the opportunity to share my story tonight. 12 years is a long time. I learned many lessons at Friends of the Children that schools don’t teach you. I am very lucky to be a part of Friends of the Children because every kid deserves to have this kind of support in their lives.



I felt misunderstood growing up. My family and I went through a lot of challenges and I had a hard time expressing my emotions. Because of that, a lot of my teachers and adults didn’t think I was capable and smart. But not at Friends. They were always there for me and supported me for who I am as someone who is funny, smart and creative. When I struggled with emotional outbursts, Mary Kate helped me use art to express myself better. When I felt lonely and sad in middle school, Shane helped me understand and accept all of the changes in life. And when I felt like giving up in high school, Kadijah reminded me of my goals and not let me give up on myself.



They make me feel like I can do anything I put my mind to even when life is hard. When I had the opportunity last summer to go to Japan to study Manga, they supported me and made sure I could go without any worries. It was an amazing trip that I’ll never forget.

I want to say thank you to my mom who worked hard and for putting me in Friends more than 12 years ago. I am excited for my future. I know college will be hard but I have overcome a lot of obstacles/Hard things and I will face it with confidence. Thank you for supporting this organization that has changed my life.”

[WATCH THE ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR VIDEO HERE](#)

