

Hello Referees,

Many of you attended an entry level referee clinic taught by me or perhaps you attended additional training that I led. You have heard me use the term, “Precious Treasures”. Our jobs as referees are to take care of parents’ precious treasures. No matter the age – when we referee a game, our #1 goal – keep the players (Precious Treasures) safe.

My sons, grandkids, daughter-in-law – **my family** are my Precious Treasures. This is how I wrapped it up into refereeing. Give your best to all that you do in life.

I was blessed to hear and read many stories about how awesome Kyle was. I knew it right away, this kid came into this world and brought joy, humor, kindness, thoughtfulness, a strong work ethic, and he served in his communities from an early age.

Someone reminded me to be thankful, every day, find things to be thankful for and write it down. I kept a gratitude journal when my boys were young. I have pages of pages of awesome memories of when Kyle was young. Thank God, I took this person’s advice. We don’t/can’t possibly remember it all. I still write stuff down.

It doesn’t take a lot to show acts of kindness. You just need to be aware of those around you. Before becoming a police officer, Kyle worked at Chick-fil-a. He worked his way up to General Manager. Just yesterday, I heard stories of how Kyle, on rainy days, would see a young mom, with her kids getting out of her car, Kyle would rush out to her, umbrella in hand and keep them dry. He did the same with the elderly.

Kyle always wanted to be a Police Officer. When he got accepted into the Academy, I said to him, “why do you want to be a Police Officer?” He replied, “my life is good mom, I want to give back, I want to serve my country”. I expected nothing less. Kyle’s last heroic act of service while in uniform – he rushed into harms way to save a stranger who called 9-1-1 for help.

Kyle’s last incredible act of saving lives as a citizen – he was an organ donor. Kyle donated his incredible, beautiful heart along with 4 other organs to save more lives.

To continue honoring Kyle’s life, my husband and I will be giving several \$500 gifts. We want to recognize those that continuously display characteristics of kindness, genuine concern, service to others, solid work ethic, honoring commitments, happiness, those who make the world a better place, a bit brighter with their presence. Those who treat people like the Precious Treasure they are.

This year's recipients of the **Kyle Hicks Memorial Award** are:

Iain Garza – is a person who puts others ahead of him. Always willing to serve and help. Iain has been a referee for 10 years. He is one of the kindest people I have met. He also changed my flat tire years ago. I told him that I had triple AAA and I knew he needed to be somewhere. He said, “I got it, I will fix it”.

Eliza Balleza – Eliza is finishing up her first year at UNT. Her major is Kinesiology. Eliza smiles all the time. She has an “I can do it” attitude and work ethic. She loves people.

Chandler Jackson – Chander is married. He is a firefighter, with the end goal of becoming a Fire Marshall. Chandler always honors his commitments, shows up to game day with a smile and offers encouragement to our newest of referees.

Brian Rusch – Brian attends TCC and is majoring in Business. Brian manages his schedule perfectly and clearly communicates his availability for the last few years.

Arturo Padilla – Arturo is in law enforcement. He is married, and has a beautiful, young, growing family. Arturo loves refereeing and brings his best to any/every game. He is such a positive person.

Lauren Wallace – Lauren is a first-year referee and LOVES IT! She is so reliable and attends referee training events when she can. Lauren will attend Tarleton in Stephenville in the fall of 2024 to finish up her bachelor's degree. Her major – Wildlife science/zoology.

Congratulations to the first recipients of the Kyle Hicks Awards.

I am grateful for how Kyle lived, proud and grateful of his life story.

Matthew 5:16 – “in the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Ann & Rob Hicks

Proud parents of Kyle Hicks

