

It all comes down to character, former Bengal says

Former Bengals offensive tackle was keynote speaker of inaugural event sponsored by Middletown Area YMCA.

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Anthony Muñoz was the keynote speaker Saturday night, Dec. 12, at the inaugural Celebration of Character event at the Manchester Inn in Middletown.

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By Jessica Heffner, Staff Writer

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MIDDLETOWN — It's not really what you do in life but how you do it.

Growing up as one of five children in a one-parent household in southern California, former Cincinnati Bengals player Anthony Muñoz learned early on about the importance of strong character and work ethic. He used this example to help push him to be the best offensive tackle he could be in his 13-year football career, and as a guide when he began the Anthony Muñoz Foundation in 2002, which he co-founded with a Middletown graduate.

As the keynote speaker of the Middletown Area YMCA's "Celebration of Character" event on Saturday, Dec. 12, at the Manchester Inn, he stressed for attendees to see those honored as examples.

"It doesn't matter who you are, it doesn't matter where you come from or how much you have accumulated. It all comes down to character," he said.

Muñoz, who said he has been to the city often on business and for a round of golf at one of the local courses, said it was inspiring to see the 439 people assembled for the event to honor those who were making a difference in the community.

"I hope the stories of the people here will encourage others to give back," he said.

Character of recipients influenced those around them

Andrew Worley was more than a great athlete, he also had a great heart.

His life and the example he made will forever be remembered through the new Andrew Worley Award to be given out every year as part of the "Celebration of Character" event held by the Middletown Area YMCA. Terry Sherrer, YMCA executive director, announced at the inaugural event Saturday, Dec. 12, that the teen's example will be used as the criteria for the award in year's to come.

"It will be an award for a great athlete with great character," he said.

Worley, a 17-year-old Franklin High School student and standout swimmer, died July 10 in a single-car crash in Clearcreek Twp. He was named the recipient of this year's YMCA Strong Kids Award.

Kyle Worley, his brother and presenter of the award, said he hoped Andrew's example and light would shine on others.

"He always had an encouraging word for everyone. He wasn't just a great swimmer, he was just a genuinely nice, fun-loving kid," he said.

All the recipients of this year's YMCA character awards were recognized for the impacts they made on other people's lives and the community at large. Honorees included William C.

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