



**Lakewood Chamber of Commerce**  
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## **Lakewood Chamber of Commerce Announces 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest Winner**

December 3, 2025 – The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Gemma Zahriyeh, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student at Emerson Elementary School, is the 2025 “Why I Love Lakewood” Essay Contest winner.

Over 185 essays were submitted by 4<sup>th</sup> graders from Lakewood City Schools, Lakewood Catholic Academy, Padre Pio Academy, and children who are home-schooled in the community. A panel of judges used a rubric to assess the originality, organization, descriptive language, and grammar of the essays, and the judges selected Gemma’s as best overall. Gemma loves Lakewood because “Lakewood isn’t just somewhere you live, it’s a part of your story.”

Gemma will be awarded a cash prize of \$100 and will walk in the Light Up Lakewood parade before she takes the stage to read her essay and help “flip the switch” to turn on the lights in Downtown Lakewood during the Light Up Lakewood festivities on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Why I Love Lakewood*** ***By: Gemma Zahriyeh***

*I love Lakewood because it's amazing!*

*First, the food is delicious. My favorite restaurant is Voodoo Tuna. There are a bunch of more restaurants only in Lakewood too.*

*Second, there are a lot of fun places like Lakewood Park. You can play and watch the sunset. Mahall's 20 Lanes is a really cool bowling alley on Madison Ave. Black Bird Baking Company is a perfect place to get a treat, and the Old Stone House Museum, where you can learn a bunch of history about the house.*

*Also, Lakewood has a great education program, awesome schools, and marvelous teachers. In my opinion, Emerson Elementary School is the best school in all of Lakewood.*

*Lakewood is special because it's where all my favorite people are. Your friends make every day so much fun. Whether you're hanging out at the park, grabbing snacks, or even just walking around. Being around them makes you feel happy, safe, and like you truly belong. The memories you make together laughing, joking, talking, or taking photos make Lakewood feel even better. It's not just about the places, it's about the people who make every moment unforgettable.*

*Lakewood isn't just somewhere you live, it's a part of your story. The streets, schools, and little places you love have helped shape who you are today. The memories, the lessons, and all the good times that have made you grow. When you think of home, you think of Lakewood, it's where you have laughed, learned, cried, and became you! No matter where you go in the future, a piece of you will always belong in Lakewood.*

*In conclusion, that is why I think Lakewood is amazing.*

**About the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce**

*Serving the greater Lakewood community for over 100 years, the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce is the leading membership organization for the advocacy and advancement of business interests. Comprised of more than 300 member businesses and individuals, the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce has a long history of advocating on behalf of businesses owners by providing group purchasing programs for products and services, advocating for changes in legislation or regulation, offering affordable marketing & promotional opportunities, and providing educational seminars, networking events, and monthly meetings for small businesses to connect with and learn from each other. ([www.lakewoodchamber.org](http://www.lakewoodchamber.org))*

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