

## ABOUT ADDIA WILLIAMS

Addia Williams lives in Boonville, California, and is a senior at Mendocino High School. But that's now. Originally she and her parents lived and worked in Santa Rosa, and frequently spent time with her beloved grandmother in Boonville and other relatives on the coast for the first 12 years of her life. After her grandmother passed, her parents felt a strong urge to be closer to family here, so they moved to Boonville, and soon their home became the new hub for family gatherings.

Imagine being uprooted from your life in a huge community with busses and planes and shopping and traffic and movie theaters and a huge school district, and finding yourself at tiny Anderson Valley Junior High School as a 7<sup>th</sup> grader with no friends and limited entertainment. But she did well and adapted.

In 9<sup>th</sup> grade she made another huge change, by deciding to make the one-hour daily bus commute to and from Mendocino High School, because it offered more college prep courses and electives, and because of their reputation for community involvement. She did not know anyone but the school hallways were lined with pictures of her parents, aunts, grandparents, and great grandparents which gave her a deep sense of belonging in a brand new space.

Addia says she has been drawn to social justice and environmental issues and has always been an advocate for positive change. She has many skills including languages and can even do calligraphy. She likes to write, and one of her teachers wrote Addia is easily one of the strongest writers that I have had the privilege of teaching. She recently published an article about the work of Love to Table-an organization promoting farm-fresh dinners for marginalized groups. Her teachers say Addia is also an engaging public speaker and will go far.

Addia herself said she hopes to combine her writing abilities with her passion for social justice to create impactful articles with the potential to reach a large audience. We hope she will become a leader in a Soroptimist club somewhere in the world.