

PRESS RELEASE

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12th ANNUAL HISPANIC HERITAGE YOUTH AWARDS' APPLICATION DRIVE LAUNCHES IN SEARCH OF YOUNG LATINO LEADERS IN 12 MARKETS ACROSS AMERICA

Latino High School Seniors Eligible to Apply for Thousands of Dollars in Educational Grants and Chance of Being Honored as Role Models at High-Profile Regional Events

WASHINGTON, DC – The Hispanic Heritage Foundation (HHF) today announced the launch of its 12th annual Hispanic Heritage Youth Awards, which identify, promote and prepare Latino leaders in the classroom and community. **Applications are now available online at www.hispanicheritage.org.** HHF and its sponsors will once again provide more than half a million dollars in educational grants to over 200 Latino high school seniors across 12 regions throughout the country. Applications must be submitted electronically by midnight **March 6, 2009**. Information about applications will also be available at SUBWAY® Restaurants.

The Youth Awards Regions include: **Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose/San Francisco-Bay Area, Phoenix, Chicago, Miami, New York, Philadelphia/New Jersey, and Washington, DC.** However, students across America can apply to their closest region and, if selected, simply have to attend the event to receive the Youth Award.

"It is critical we recognize and reward the remarkable accomplishments of our youth and more importantly position them as role models for younger Latinos," said Jose Antonio Tijerino, President and CEO of HHF. "We recently conducted a survey of Americans with Zogby which alarmingly found that *only* 35 percent believed Latinos would make a positive impact as the largest minority going forward. The Youth Awardees we highlight through our program not only dispel that misperception but make all Americans optimistic about our future. We thank our dedicated sponsors for believing in the Latino community."

Students are selected for their accomplishments in the classroom, community and for their interest in several categories. Three students (Gold, Silver and Bronze) will be honored in each of the six categories in each of the 12 regions. The 2009 Youth Awards categories are:

- **Business**, for students who are interested in entering the field of business – sponsored by the *National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSHMBA)*
- **Education**, for students with a interested in being teachers or entering the educational field – sponsored by *Southwest Airlines*
- **Engineering & Mathematics**, for students with a strong interest in the fields of mathematics, engineering, or technology; sponsored by *ExxonMobil*
- **Journalism**, for students involved in print, broadcast, photo or online journalism; sponsored by *NBC Universal and Telemundo*
- **Sports**, for students who excel in athletics; sponsored by *SUBWAY®* restaurants
- **Science & Healthcare**, for students interested in the field of healthcare and science.

In addition, the *US Army* will recognize one of the 18 regional recipients for their exceptional **Leadership** in each of the 12 regions (12 total Leadership Youth Awardees). In an effort to recognize the important contributions of teachers in the students' success, each of the Youth Awardees will nominate an educator who has made a difference in their life and one will be presented the **Teacher Award** by the *Staples Foundation for Learning* in each region.

The Youth Awardees are chosen by regional selection committees in each of the regions. In the spring, Youth Awards Ceremonies will be coordinated at top colleges and universities in each of the 12 regions in honor of the young role models and the sponsors.

The success of the Youth Awards program is predicated by the support of thousands of high schools and community organizations including the Hispanic College Fund, Teach 4 America, Voto Latino, NRCCUA and HBI. In addition to the category sponsors listed above, the Youth Award Partners include AstraZeneca, UPS, AT&T, Teleflora and POM.

After the local ceremonies, the Regional Youth Awards recipients are narrowed down to one national Youth Award recipient for each category. Those individuals will be honored at the National Youth Awards presentation where each student receives an additional educational grant and a laptop computer. The National Youth Awardees will then be presented with their award onstage during the 22nd Annual Hispanic Heritage Awards in Washington, DC at the venerable Kennedy Center on September 30, 2009.

About the Hispanic Heritage Foundation

The Hispanic Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit organization which identifies, inspires, promotes, and prepares Latino leaders through educational, cultural and workforce programs. For more information, please visit www.HispanicHeritage.org or for an introduction to HHF's mission visit www.HHFvideo.com.

<p>NOTE: To sponsor the Hispanic Heritage Youth Awards and other Hispanic Heritage Foundation programs please call 202.861.9797.</p>

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