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# Finalists Named for 2001 Florida College Student of the Year Award

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (3/01) — After a yearlong search for Florida's best students, *Florida Leader* magazine has chosen 20 outstanding campus leaders to represent the state in the 14th annual **Florida College Student of the Year Award**. Seven finalists now will vie for the title, with one overall winner to be announced on April 13, 2001 at a press conference in Tallahassee. The event later will be televised statewide on The Sunshine Network. The prestigious awards program recognizes students who support themselves financially through college, excel academically, and are involved in community service and political activism.

Top students from universities, private colleges, and community colleges throughout Florida compete in the statewide scholarship program sponsored by *Florida Leader*, SunTrust, Publix Super Markets, and other companies that support the recognition of excellence in Florida higher education. More than 5,000 students inquired about how to apply for the 2001 Award, and nearly 150 submitted applications.

The 2001 finalists are: Sarah Baskin of **Flagler College**, Ti'eshia Daniels of the **University of Central Florida**, Brian Dassler of the **University of Florida**, Sarah Hard of **St. Leo University**, Alissa King of **South-eastern College**, Tasha Phipps of **Miami-Dade Community College-North Campus**, and Toni Rice of **Florida Gulf Coast University**.

Thirteen other students also will receive recognition as honorable mention winners: Arielle Brouillard of **Central Florida Community College**, Aina Kristiansen of **Daytona Beach Community College**, Shannon Maguire of **Pensacola Junior College**, Luis Maldonado of **Stetson University**, Nancy McGrotty of **Pasco-Hernando Community College**, Tyler Merritt of the **University of West Florida**, Sasha Minor of **Gulf Coast**

**Community College**, Lee Palmer of **St. Petersburg Junior College**, Daniel Prather of **Florida International University**, Shannon Price of **Florida State University**, Paul Trusik of the **University of Tampa**, Jennifer Whitesel of **Nova Southeastern University**, and Bryan Wooten of **Central Florida Community College**.

The 2001 winners will share nearly \$55,000 in scholarships and prizes from **SunTrust**, **Publix Super Markets Inc**, **Gulfstream International Airlines**, **Eastpak**, **Jiffy Lube**, **Checker's Drive-In Restaurants**, **The Anthony Grandio Company**, and other sponsors. All 20 students also will be featured in the "Student of the Year" issue of *Florida Leader* magazine published in April.

"The diverse group of students recognized this year is a testament to the wonderful variety of students we have at colleges across Florida," says **W.H. "Butch" Oxendine, Jr.**, publisher of *Florida Leader* magazine. "The outstanding quality of this year's applicants signals a resurgence of student activism, as students across the country are taking greater responsibility for improving the world around them. This year's winners are self-reliant student leaders who understand the importance of community and political activism."

The 2001 applicants were reviewed by a panel of distinguished judges, including State Board of Community Colleges Executive Director **David Armstrong**, and Flagler College President **William Proctor**, as well as other respected educators, business leaders, and journalists statewide.

*Florida Leader*, the founding sponsor, is a newsmagazine read by students at 86 colleges and 550 public and private high schools throughout the state of Florida. Now in its 18th year of publishing, *Florida Leader* has won first prize nationally for editorial excellence among college magazines. Oxendine Publishing, Inc. also produces the national leadership magazine *Student Leader*.

*For more details on the Friday, April 13 press conference when the overall 2001 winner will be announced, contact W.H. "Butch" Oxendine, Jr. at (352) 373-6907. The seven finalists and 13 honorable mention winners and their families, judges, sponsors, Gov. Jeb Bush, and Commissioner of Education Charlie Crist will be in attendance at the 1:30 p.m. press conference and awards reception on the 22nd floor of The Capitol Building in Tallahassee. Copies of the "Student of the Year" issue of Florida Leader will be available featuring the winners and their achievements. A television show based on the event will be aired statewide on The Sunshine Network.*