



CONTACT:

Stephanie Reck or Butch Oxendine
(352) 373-6907
info@studentleader.com
www.floridaleader.com/soty

University of Florida Student Named Finalist for the 2002 Florida College Student of the Year Award

Gainesville, Fla (4-02)—Michael Gale, a junior in zoology and wildlife ecology with a 3.96 GPA at the University of Florida, is one of seven finalists statewide for the 2002 Florida College Student of the Year Award. One of the finalists will be named "Student of the Year."

Gale and 19 other students from colleges and universities across Florida will share \$55,000 in scholarships and prizes and will be honored Friday, April 12 at an awards ceremony and press conference at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee.

Gale was selected from 144 applicants in the annual scholarship program sponsored by *Florida Leader* magazine, SunTrust Education Loans, and Office Depot. The Florida College Student of the Year Award celebrates 15 years of recognizing outstanding Florida college students for their campus leadership, academic excellence, and financial self-reliance. Gale's numerous involvements on UF's campus qualify him as a finalist for this prestigious award.

Gale serves the college as an Honors Ambassador, and because of his work over the last two years as a Resident Assistant, he has been instrumental in creating the new honors residential college, opening in the fall 2002 at UF. "With my background in housing and being an officer in the national collegiate honor council, I felt it was important for me to step up so that I could be used as a resource, being the only student leader on campus involved in both," Gale says.

Gale also serves as the Environmental Affairs Cabinet Director for Student Government. In that role, his contributions have ranged from getting Styrofoam banned from the campus dining facilities to expanding the existing recycling facilities to creating a huge Earth Day celebration. His passion for the environment is also fostered by his volunteer work at the Florida Museum for Natural History.

Among his other activities, Gale has worked with the School for Field Studies, the Watershed Action Volunteer Network, Greening UF, and the UF Environmental and Health Safety Committee. When he takes a break from his environmental interest, Gale plays first-chair alto saxophone for UF's Symphonic Band, is a member of Theater Strike Force, and is the social chair for Kappa Kappa Psi.

Students at 86 colleges and nearly 550 high schools throughout Florida read *Florida Leader*, founding sponsor of the Florida College Student of the Year Award. Now in its 19th year, Oxendine Publishing also produces the national leadership magazine *Student Leader*. See www.floridaleader.com/soty for more details on the annual scholarship program and the other finalists.