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Central Florida Community College Student Named Finalist for the 2003 Florida College Student of the Year Award

Gainesville, Fla (4/03)—Jane Pope, a sophomore in journalism with a 3.45 GPA at Central Florida Community College, is among seven finalists statewide vying for the title of 2003 Florida College Student of the Year.

Pope and 19 other students from colleges and universities across Florida will share \$65,000 in scholarships and prizes. They will be honored Friday, April 11 at an awards ceremony and press conference held at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee.

Pope was selected from 156 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 16 years of recognizing outstanding Florida college students for their campus leadership, academic excellence, and financial self-reliance. Pope's dedication and active participation qualify her for this prestigious award.

Pope is founder and president of the Rotaract Club, a branch of Rotary for college students. She started this organization after being an active member of Interact in high school. "I love working with Rotary and the community," Pope says. "So I was really excited to start one on campus." Rotaract has become one of the most prominent service clubs at CFCC.

Through Rotaract, Pope led fundraising for the Humane Society, worked with Habitat for Humanity and an adopt-a-highway clean-up project, and organized an Earth Day celebration.

Pope's commitment to her campus doesn't stop at Rotaract. Along with Dr. Donald Hunt, vice president of student affairs, Pope started the student volunteerism office. This program creates transcripts of students' volunteer hours that are sent along with transcripts to universities and colleges. Pope uses this responsibility to inform students about ways they can gain volunteer hours.

Pope's love of volunteering also is evident in her job as coordinator of Volunteer Days. In this event, she gets various volunteer organizations from campus to come out and set up information booths. "She's a servant leader, and she doesn't even seem to know it," Hunt says.

In addition to on-campus activities, Pope also serves as a representative of the college to the community as reigning Ms. CFCC, an honor that requires appearances at alumni events, board of trustee meetings, and local high schools to promote the college. She also is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and the Student Activities Board.

She plans to transfer to either the University of Florida or the University of Central Florida this fall and get her bachelors degree in communication.

The complete Florida College Student of the Year awards ceremony will air on Sunshine Network on May 21 at 5 p.m. and on May 27 at 10:30 a.m. It also will air throughout the month of June.

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 20th 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.