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## Finalists Named for 2003 Florida College Student of the Year Award

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (03-03) — *Florida Leader* magazine spent a year searching and has chosen 20 exceptional campus leaders to represent the state in the 16th annual **Florida College Student of the Year Award**. Seven finalists now will vie for the title of "Student of the Year" which will be announced on April 11, 2003 at a press conference in Tallahassee. The event will be televised statewide on The 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. The prestigious awards program recognizes students who support themselves financially through college, excel academically, and are involved in community service and political activism.

Students from across the state, whether enrolled in public colleges or universities, private colleges or universities, or community colleges compete in the statewide scholarship program sponsored by *Florida Leader*, SunTrust, Office Depot, 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 2003 Award, and 156 submitted applications.

The 2003 finalists are: Michael Gale of the **University of Florida**, Amanda Howey of **Eckerd College**, Brittany Jowers of **Florida Community College at Jacksonville—Kent**, Vincent Lau Chan of **Miami-Dade Community College—North**, Andrew Merkin of **Rollins College**, Jane Pope of **Central Florida Community College**, Christiana Prichard of **Chipola Junior College**.

Thirteen other students also will receive recognition as honorable mention winners: Brain Battles of the **University of Central Florida**, Kelly Browning of the **University of South Florida**, James Chambers of **Stetson University**, Steven Cohen of the **University of Florida**, Jason Guercio of the **University of Miami**, Bruce Haupt of **Brevard Community College**, Andrew Hazelton of **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University**, Tammy Hohimer of the **University of West Florida**, Jamie Lowe of **Florida College**, Michael Petrauskas of **Florida State University**, Adam Singleton of **Jacksonville University**, Yasmine Taeb of the **University of Florida**, Cathalain Marie Tobin of **Florida Southern College**.

The 2003 winners will share nearly \$65,000 in scholarship and prizes from **Suntrust, Office Depot, Gulfstream International Airlines, Florida Monthly Magazine, Eastpak, Jiffy Lube, Checker's Drive-In**

**Restaurants, The Anthony Grandio Company,** and other sponsors. All 20 students will also 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.”

### **About *Florida Leader***

*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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup>, press conference when the overall 2003 winner will be announced, contact W.H. “Butch” Oxendine, Jr. at [info@studentleader.com](mailto:info@studentleader.com). The seven finalists and 13 honorable mention winners and their families, judges, sponsors, and Commissioner of Education Jim Horne will be in attendance at the 1:30 p.m. press conference and awards reception on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor of The Capitol Building in Tallahassee. A television show based on the event will be aired statewide on The Sunshine Network.*