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University of Florida Student Named Finalist for the 2005 Florida College Student of the Year Award

Gainesville, Fla. (03-28) – Megan Hoot, a senior in family, youth, and community sciences at the University of Florida with a 3.77 GPA, is one of seven finalists for the 2005 Florida College Student of the Year Award.

Hoot and 19 other students from colleges and universities across Florida will share \$65,000 in scholarships and prizes and will be honored Friday, April 8 at an awards ceremony and press conference at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee.

Hoot was selected from 78 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 18 years of recognizing outstanding Florida college students for their campus leadership, academic excellence, and financial self-reliance.

"Being an active citizen is what makes a good community function," Hoot says. At 21, she's exactly that—an active citizen and a true leader. She's president of the Gator Humanics

program and the FYCS club, serves as the associate coordinator for Florida Blue Key, and is vice president of her sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma.

In fall 2003, she helped bring the first nonprofit minor to UF, which helped students interested in nonprofit careers acquire skills in marketing, fund raising, and public relations. She truly leaves behind a legacy at UF, as two more minors called "Leadership" and "National Assistance" will be offered to public service students beginning this summer.

Since the nonprofit sector is the fastest growing sector in the country, volunteers are becoming very important. Hoot believes that if volunteers could band together with the right resources and training, they could become a powerful force. "That's part of my mission in life," she says. "To continue to further that."

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 22nd 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 other finalists.