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## **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Student Wins 2005 Florida College Student of the Year Award**

Gainesville, Fla. (04-08) – Matthew Collier, a senior in aerospace engineering at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a 3.64 GPA, is the winner of the 2005 Florida College Student of the Year Award.

Collier and 19 other students from colleges and universities across Florida will share \$50,000 in scholarships and prizes. The ceremony was at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee. Collier appears on the cover of *Florida Leader* magazine and is profiled at [www.floridaleader.com/soty](http://www.floridaleader.com/soty).

Collier 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.

"I've learned that going to college is more than going to class," Collier says. The Student Government Association president's actions speak much louder than these words. Among other roles, he's a peer mentor, a member of the board of trustees, an *Avion* newspaper guest reporter, and is serving a two-year term as chair of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida Student Alliance, which he played a major role in founding.

As a leader in all these roles, Collier has been focused on change. One of these lasting changes is the long-awaited construction of a modernized student union building, which is finally underway because of Collier's efforts. "A student union is the living room of a campus community," Collier says. "It's not only a building but also a program designed to enrich campus life and further the university's mission statement." With that logic, he pushed for a \$150 student-activities fee to cover construction and maintenance costs and won the majority of the SGA's approval.

"It's my feeling that any student, regardless of how new they are to the university, needs to be involved not only in academics but also in extracurricular activities—be it Student Government or clubs," Collier says. It's this feeling that prompted him to implement Task Force One. The program is a critical first step in ERAU's Four-Year Experience, which is designed to facilitate student involvement at every stage of education. Task Force One consults with the SGA president about freshman issues and also serves as a training bed for future leadership.

This summer, check the Florida Leader homepage at [www.floridaleader.com](http://www.floridaleader.com) for scheduling and stations for the broadcast of the Florida College Student of the Year program.