



## **Houston student wins full college scholarship; one of five in nation chosen for honors**

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Philadelphia (July 21, 2009) – Juan Hernandez, a student at the John H. Reagan High School in Houston, Texas, is one of five students in the nation who will receive full college scholarships from the Leonore Annenberg College Scholarship Fund. The value of the scholarship will depend on the cost of the student's college.

Other students chosen to receive the awards live in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, and rural Vermont. The awards were made in the students' junior year to allow them to select a college based on their aspirations and abilities, not finances. The all-expense scholarships cover tuition and fees, room and board, books, a laptop, as well as a modest stipend.

Now in its second year, the college scholarship program is part of the Leonore Annenberg Scholarship and School Funds, a three-pronged philanthropic initiative that targets young people who possess the potential to become the cultural and community leaders of the next generation. The awards focus on exceptional young artists, successful high school juniors who have faced serious challenges, and public elementary schools lacking essential resources for their students.

The program reflects the late Leonore Annenberg's lifelong commitment to public service, education and the arts, and her unparalleled efforts to improve the lives of the nation's youth.

"These awards provide opportunities for artistic growth and educational advancement to beneficiaries whose contributions will strengthen American cultural life and enrich our democracy. Their conduct and body of work will serve as a constant reminder of Leonore Annenberg's generosity and high standards," said Gail Levin, director of the program.

Houston A+ Challenge provided key assistance in nominating Juan for this award, and the organization will continue to support Juan through a mentoring process throughout high school and in college.

Juan was ranked fourth in his junior class at J. H. Reagan High School, which serves more than 1,000 students in grades 7-12. He has consistently made Academic Honor Roll, won the School and Regional Science Fairs in 2007 and 2009, received a TAKS Commendation (for performance on the state-mandated tests), and is a Project GRAD Texas Scholar. One of his teachers described Juan's strong performance and bright prospects in this way: "Even though he has very limited resources from home, he has demonstrated outstanding leadership and maintained a clear sense of purpose in his classes. . . . I am confident that he will continue to succeed in his academic career."

As impressive as Juan's academic achievements is his exemplary service record. Inspired by his late grandfather who believed deeply in the importance of education and public service, Juan plans to pursue a career in public service, perhaps in the field of law enforcement. He already has committed more than 100 hours to Communities in Schools (CIS) at Eugene Field Elementary School, where he tutors second- and third-grade students who fail the Texas Education Agency tests in math. He also has participated in the School District's "Reach Out to Dropouts Day" and "Walk for Success," in which he visited recent dropout students in the Harris County area, offering encouragement to continue their high school education. Finally, Juan has volunteered countless hours helping homeless people at the Open Door Mission in nearby Harrisburg, serving breakfast, cleaning the cafeteria and kitchen areas, and attending a church session in the Mission's chapel.

Teachers at Juan's school have remarked on his inquisitive nature, his talent for writing, and his drive, all qualities that will serve him well as he pursues his education, supports his community, and strives to serve the nation.

Students who were selected as Leonore Annenberg College Scholarship recipients last year, 2008, will be attending Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago and Tufts University this fall.

Visit [www.LeonoreAnnenbergScholarships.org](http://www.LeonoreAnnenbergScholarships.org) for more information.

To learn more about Houston A+ Challenge, visit [www.houstonaplus.org](http://www.houstonaplus.org).

#### About the Benefactor

*Leonore Annenberg* (1918-2009) served as U.S. Chief of Protocol during the first term of the administration of Ronald Reagan, a position that carries the rank of ambassador. She spent most of her life working toward the enhancement of cultural appreciation among American citizens. As chairman and president of the Annenberg Foundation, she also supported a wide range of institutions and organizations in the areas of education, health and civics.

She was a trustee and a member of the Acquisitions Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1991, she and her husband Walter H. Annenberg, a former Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, donated their collection of more than 50 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, watercolors and drawings to the museum. The collection is acknowledged as one of the most distinguished private collections of its kind. She was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a member of the Trustee's Council of the National Gallery of Art, and one of the managing directors

of the Metropolitan Opera, to which she provided a partial endowment to continue its international radio broadcasts. She was a long-time trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, underwriting a new building for the Annenberg Public Policy Center and establishing the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics. She was also a member of the American Philosophical Society, the country's first learned society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Mrs. Annenberg graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She received the National Medal of Arts from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy and the United Nations Association Global Leadership Award. Mrs. Annenberg was awarded honorary degrees from Brown University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Southern California, Brandeis University, and other institutions.