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Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott Announce 2017 Black History Month Student and Teacher Contest Winners

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott announced the 2017 Black History Month student contest winners and Excellence in Education award recipients. This year's theme was "*A Recognition of the Role of African-Americans in Shaping Florida Today*," and the winners were honored during the annual Black History Month reception at the Florida Governor's Mansion.

Governor Scott said, "Ann and I look forward to celebrating Black History Month every year and recognizing the countless individuals who have made a tremendous impact on our great state. I am honored to recognize this year's student winners on their accomplishments and thank the educators for their commitment to Florida's students."

First Lady Ann Scott said, "Black History Month is a time to celebrate the unique and diverse culture that we value so much in Florida. I was very impressed with this year's contest entries. When I visit schools across our beautiful state, I am excited to see the students' enthusiasm about learning and encourage them to celebrate the accomplishments of African-Americans who have made an impact on their lives."

The 2017 Black History Month featured artist is Eluster Richardson. Eluster's artwork has won numerous awards and has been exhibited in a variety of settings, including the Museum of Florida History, Lemoyne Art Foundation, Florida State Museum of Art, Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. Eluster began painting as a child in the third grade and currently maintains a studio in Tallahassee.

Governor Scott and First Lady Ann Scott honored three outstanding educators with the Excellence in Education Award. These individuals were nominated by students and peers, and each received \$1,500 from Volunteer Florida.

Excellence in Education award recipients are:

- Kimberly Rostick, Corbett Preparatory School of IDS, Tampa, Hillsborough County
- Michael Burton, Workman Middle School, Pensacola, Escambia County
- Makeda Brome, Lincoln Park Academy, Fort Pierce, St. Lucie County

The following student essay contest winners – one elementary, one middle, and one high school student – earned a four-year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation.

Student essay contest winners are:

- Isabel Alvarez, Aventura City of Excellence Public Charter School, Aventura, Miami-Dade County (4th-5th grade)
- Destiny Stewart, Deer Lake Middle School, Tallahassee, Leon County (6th-8th grade)
- Nathalie Sieh, Clearwater Central Catholic School, Clearwater, Pinellas County (9th-12th grade)

The following student art contest winners each received \$250.

Student art contest winners are:

- Hailey Kate Soto, Columbia Elementary School, Orlando, Orange County (Kindergarten-1st grade)
- Christian Dunnon, Glade View Elementary School, Belle Glade, Palm Beach County (2nd-3rd grade)

Volunteer Florida also recognized Champion of Service Wesley L. Harris, Founding Pastor of the Lord's House International Ministries in Clermont, Florida.

The Black History Month reception and awards are supported by Volunteer Florida, Florida Prepaid College Foundation, and [more](#).

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