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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott Invite K-12 Students to Participate in 2017 Hispanic Heritage Month Contests

~ Student winners will earn a four-year Florida College Plan scholarship ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott announced the 2017 Hispanic Heritage Month contests for students and educators. Florida K-12 students are invited to participate in the essay and art contests. Parents, students, teachers and principals are also invited to nominate full-time, outstanding educators for the Hispanic Heritage Month Excellence in Education Award.

Governor Rick Scott said, "Hispanic Heritage Month contests give students an opportunity to win a four-year Florida College Plan scholarship while learning about the influential Hispanic Floridians who have shaped our state's history. I encourage all of Florida's students to participate."

First Lady Ann Scott said, "I am proud to join Floridians across the state in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. This is an exciting opportunity to recognize the many influential Hispanic Floridians in our state and throughout its history. I am also honored to highlight the work of the enormously gifted Carmen Sasieta, our 2017 Hispanic Heritage Month featured artist. I am so impressed with the students' enthusiasm at the schools I visit and I look forward to seeing this year's contest entries."

John D. Rood, Florida Prepaid College Foundation Board Chairman said, "We are so pleased to have the opportunity to award the gift of education through these Hispanic Heritage Month awards. Our Florida College Plans are a great option for any student. More students are earning their degrees at one of our 28 state colleges, so we hope these scholarships pave the way for the academic success of these students."

Cynthia F. O'Connell, Director of the Florida Prepaid College Foundation said, "This Foundation looks forward to awarding the winners of these initiatives. These essay and art contests are a wonderful illustration of our commitment to working with partners like Volunteer Florida and the Governor's Office to find and support Florida's next generation of talent."

The theme for this year's essay and art contests is "A Recognition of the Role of Hispanic-Americans in Shaping Florida Today." Students are asked to share how Hispanic Floridians have impacted our state's history and culture. More information about the contests and Florida's Hispanic Heritage Month is available at www.FloridaHispanicHeritage.com.

This year's Hispanic Heritage Month featured artist is Carmen Sasieta.

About the Student Contests

Art Contest for Grades K-3: The Hispanic Heritage Month art contest is open to all Florida students in grades K-3, and two winners will be selected.

Essay Contest for Grades 4-12: The Hispanic Heritage Month essay contest is open to all Florida students in grades 4 through 12. Three winners will be selected: one elementary student (grades 4-5), one middle-school student (grades 6-8), and one high school student (grades 9-12). Winners will receive a four-year Florida College Plan scholarship provided by the Florida Prepaid College Foundation.

About the Excellence in Education Award

Governor Scott's annual Hispanic Heritage Month Excellence in Education Award Contest is open to all full-time educators in an elementary, middle or high school in Florida. Three winners will be selected: one elementary school (grades K-5) teacher, one middle school (grades 6-8) teacher and one high school (grades 9-12) teacher.

All entry forms and guidelines for the contests, as well as additional information about Florida's Hispanic Heritage Month and other related events, can be found at www.FloridaHispanicHeritage.com.

Contest Entries and Nominations

Student contest forms and educator nomination forms must be mailed to Volunteer Florida or submitted online at www.FloridaHispanicHeritage.com. Please mail your forms to:

Volunteer Florida
3800 Esplanade Way
Suite 180
Tallahassee, FL 32311

All entries must be mailed to Volunteer Florida or submitted online and **received by 5:00 p.m. September 12, 2017.**

For additional information about Florida's Hispanic Heritage, contests and other related events, please visit www.FloridaHispanicHeritage.com.

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