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SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



At the HHAE luncheon Thursday, May 26th, we were honored to have great Hispanic leader and public servant Mr. Arturo Michel, City of Houston Attorney present the HHAE Scholarships to the 2005 recipients. Victoria Reyes was awarded a scholarship totaling \$12,500 for architecture studies and Jose Flores and Janine Nunfio each received \$1,000. The scholarships were awarded

to these Hispanic high school students based on academic achievement, financial need and community involvement determined by HHAE's Scholarship Nominating Board. Arcadio Blonski will be mentoring the students through the next four years and updating HHAE on their careers.



**Victoria Reyes** ranked number 17 out of 241 students in her graduation class as E.L. Furr High School with a grade point average of 3.94. An active member in the community, Victoria was also a varsity tennis player and received National Honor Roll, Who's Who Among American High School Students and the All-American Scholar Program. With career aspirations to be an architect and start a family business, Victoria plans to attend the University of Houston and study architecture.



**Jose Flores** graduated Stephen F. Austin and plans on attending Houston Community College and transferring to the University of Houston with an engineering degree. A varsity football player for his high school, Jose was also awarded Magnet Student of the Year when he was a sophomore.

**Janine Nunfio** graduated Stratford High School and plans on majoring in architecture at Prarie View A&M. Janine received a scholarship last year to attend the pre-college summer program at Rhode Island School of Design and was also active in a number of sports and community-related activities. Janine wants to open her own firm in the future to assist immigrant families unable to purchase their own home.

*The HHA E Scholarship Selection Committee wanted to take this opportunity and share the essay written by scholarship recipient Victoria Reyes. After reading this essay, she received a unanimous vote among members on the Committee for 2005's Architecture Scholarship.*

### **VICTORIA REYES—PERSONAL STATEMENT**

As a child growing up in a predominantly Mexican-American community, I was exposed to many things. Many of which were more negative than positive. I can honestly say that to this day they continue to inspire me to surpass even my highest expectations.

As a Hispanic student from an inner city school, it has become increasingly difficult to envision the realization of my parents dream. If nothing else, they want me to succeed. My father, having crossed the border from Mexico, at the age of seventeen, spent his time looking for any type of job to secure enough money to afford food and shelter. I listen to the stories of his laborious past and consider the countless times that I have taken the simple roof over my head for granted. This is America, "the land of opportunity," a land that thousands of people risk their lives every year to become a part of.

Today's youth has so many things available to them, yet they still refuse to benefit from what all this country has to offer. Graduating from high school is considered a major achievement for most Hispanics, I am in no way trying to deprecate that accomplishment, but is that enough? As a Hispanic, I am victim to the labels that society has effortlessly given me. I do not want to be a factor in another statistic—a teenage mother, a dropout, and so forth. I want to become someone who will contribute to the abolishment of Hispanic stereotypes; I want to take the Hispanic culture one step higher in the social order.

Thanks to my parents and self motivation, I have managed to stay in the Top 10% of my class with honors, which allows me the freedom of automatic admission into any Texas public university. At the time being, I am set to continue my education at the University of Houston Main Campus. I have set Architecture as my goal, and as a result, have already enrolled in introductory courses of computer aided drafting.

I am confident and determined to succeed in each and every one of my future endeavors. The support that I have been surrounded by throughout all of my life will undoubtedly follow me into my adulthood. In brevity, I appreciate the chance to be considered for this award and hope that you see me as the deserving candidate that I am.

—*Victoria Reyes*

### **UPCOMING LUNCHEONS**

**July 7**—Ms. Elvia Cardinal, Director of Consultant Contract Administration for TxDOT

**August 4**—Mr. Joe Turner, Director of Houston Parks and Recreation Department and  
Ms. Roksan Okan-Vick from the Houston Parks Board

**September 8**—Mr. Jim Edmonds, Chairman of the Port of Houston

**October 6**—Ms. Sylvia Garcia, County Commissioner, Precinct 2