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**64 HISD students named National Hispanic Recognition Program finalists**

*Nov. 23, 2015* – Sixty-four seniors from 15 Houston Independent School District high schools were recognized for their academic excellence as part of the College Board’s 32nd annual National Hispanic Recognition Program.

The HISD seniors are among about 5,000 students from across the country and abroad to be named finalists in the program, which colleges use to identify academically exceptional students of Hispanic or Latin descent to receive scholarships. The district more than doubled the number of honorees this year, up from 26 finalists last year.

“We are extremely proud to see so many more of our students honored by the National Hispanic Recognition Program for their academic achievements,” HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said. “We are committed to closing the achievement gap and making sure all students reach their full potential and graduate ready to take on the world.”

The National Hispanic Recognition Program honors Hispanic students who are top scorers on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher by the middle of their junior year of high school. About 250,000 Hispanic/Latin juniors take the PSAT every year, according to the College Board.

The HISD students attend Bellaire, Carnegie Vanguard, East Early College, Lamar, Milby, Reagan, Washington, and Westside high schools, as well as DeBakey High School for Health Professions, Eastwood Academy, High School for the Performing & Visual Arts, Houston Academy for International Studies, Mickey Leland College Preparatory Academy for Young Men, Mount Carmel Academy, and Texas Connections Academy at Houston.

In 2014, the HISD College Readiness Department launched a new initiative to increase the number of National Hispanic Recognition, National Merit, and National Achievement scholars in the district by offering PSAT test preparation camps to rising eleventh graders.

HISD’s 2015-2016 National Hispanic Recognition Program finalists are:

**Bellaire High School**

Elisa Arango

Tomas Arango

Sandra Delgado

Ervin Graubard

Amanda Martinez

**Carnegie Vanguard High School**

Pamela Banner

Cole Bennette

Carlos Escobar

Bianca Davis

Leslie Gutierrez

Stephanie Hernandez

Solmarie Ipina

Alison Maillard

Joseph Palacios

Daisey Pena

John Perez

Benjamin Rodriguez

Janeth Rodriguez

Carlos Sosa

Jonathan Trujillo

**DeBakey High School for Health Professions**

Mourad Berrached

Karina Carcamo

Daniel Cota

Hannah Gilbonio

Lizeth Guzman

Celeste Hernandez

Edgar Lozano

Carlos Marquez

Jason Mendez

Daniel Moraled

Valerie Rodriguez

Giselle Santillana

Melissa Torres

**East Early College High School**

Yesenia Guevara

Cesar Rodriguez

**Eastwood Academy**

Omar Arreola

Jessica Benitez

Ariana Galvan

Jesus Maldonado

**High School for the Performing & Visual Arts**

Paris Bezanis

Bianca Canal

Kimberly Medrano

Samuel Molina

Halle Purdom

Gabriela Tallin

John Tovar

**Houston Academy for International Studies**

Andrea Aragon

Melody Moreno

**Lamar High School**

Pablo Cantu

Jesse Aranda-Comer

Eduardo Garcia

Danielle Singer

James Yokley

**Mickey Leland College Preparatory Academy for Young Men**

Marcos Lopez

**Milby High School**

Oriana Cruz

Jesus Reyna

**Mount Carmel Academy**

Erika Ortiz

**Reagan High School**

Stefany Garcia

**Texas Connections Academy at Houston**

Angelica Ruedas

**Washington High School**

Jacob Morgan

**Westside High School**

Nathan Drury

Kaitlyn Gabaldon

Victor Morandi

Anneleise Sebesta

