

**MEDIA ADVISORY/PRESS RELEASE**

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**CIANCI SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO 15 MEMBERS OF CLASS OF 2011**

*Former Providence Mayor Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. will host a reception for members of the Class of 2011 who are recipients of Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. Scholarships, and their families, this Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, in the Common Room of the 903 Residences on Promenade Street, Providence, at 6:30 PM. Former Mayor Cianci will recognize this year's 14 award recipients, recent graduates of schools in the capital city, and present each of them with a \$1,000 scholarship. An additional student is receiving a \$1,000 Cianci Scholarship as the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, Sons of Italy recipient. Guidance counselors from representative Providence Schools will also join in celebrating the award winners.*

Since 1994, more than 215 scholarships and approximately \$240,000 in financial assistance has been awarded to deserving recipients who have graduated from Providence or independent high schools and who have continued their education at colleges throughout the United States. The scholarships are funded from a portion of the sales of the popular **Mayor's Own Marinara Sauce** that made its debut in area and regional shops and supermarkets in August 1995.

A Cianci Scholarship Committee comprised of guidance counselors and faculty of the Providence School Department, chooses Providence awardees, under the auspices of Jeffrey R. Kenyon, former head of guidance at Central and PAIS high schools. The Sons of Italy Award goes to a Rhode Island high school senior selected by the Order Sons of Italy.

Former Mayor Cianci said, "While I salute the 2011 Cianci scholars for exceptional success in their academics, my priority in awarding scholarships is to recognize well-rounded students with acute financial need who demonstrate dedicated service to the community. All of these students meet this criteria, and I am honored to provide some aid to these deserving, motivated and accomplished students to assist them in achieving their dreams and their goals."

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Those awarded Cianci Scholarships this year are as follows:

**Jenelia Aponte-Andrade** is a recent graduate of the Providence Academy of International Studies (PAIS) who will attend the University of Rhode Island at Kingston. Accomplished in poetry and writing, she plans to pursue a major in journalism.

**Kevin Bencosme**, with roots in the Dominican Republic, is a recent graduate of LaSalle Academy who will attend Pace University in the fall. A volunteer at St. Patrick's Soup Kitchen, the Providence Community Health Center, and who has also volunteered in local political campaigns, Kevin also participated in LaSalle's mission trip to Camden, New Jersey.

**Evan Fleming** of Classical High School will attend St. John's University. Evan took a number of challenging AP courses, played varsity football and ran track and field, and was a volunteer for the Rhode Island Cultural and Enrichment Program during his years at Classical. He is also active in the Ebenezer Baptist Church community.

**Fransheley Heredia** of Hope High School Arts Academy will attend Bryant University. Earning top grades in AP English Literature and advanced math and active in the JROTC program and student government, she will major in international business at Bryant.

**Jairo Jimenez** is a recent graduate of Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School who will study culinary arts at Johnson & Wales University. With skills ranging from ping-pong to excelling in playing the trumpet, he also took many AP courses, excelled in French and attained a high ranking in his class.

**Tawanna Johnson** of E-Cubed Academy will study at Brandeis University. Working for AS220 Youth and volunteering for Liberian Shipping and the RI Food Bank, she also interned at the International Institute of Rhode Island. Tawanna plans to study photography and creative writing at Brandeis.

**Tina Meetran** of Classical High School will attend Clark University this fall where she plans to pursue science and major in biology, while also studying photography and social justice. She took a substantial number of AP courses at Classical and also was active in New Urban Arts and Youth 4 Change.

**Michael Minogue**, a recent graduate of Mt. Pleasant High School will attend Springfield College. One of the top-ranked students in his class, he volunteered for Volunteers in Providence Schools (VIPS) and also played football and ran track & field.

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**Sebastian Orellana**, a recent graduate of the Providence Career Technical Academy, will study at the Community College of Rhode Island, Providence campus, where he will pursue studies in culinary arts, with a goal of becoming a world-class chef!

**Jose Paz**, a member of the Class of 2011 at Central High School, will attend Stonehill College. With roots in Guatemala, Jose also participated in the Upward Bound Program and was a member of his school's Yearbook Committee and newspaper, and also volunteered for Volunteers in Providence Schools (VIPS) and worked on the Census.

**Joaquin Romero** excelled in a challenging course load at Times 2 Academy, including AP calculus, and will attend Providence College this fall. Fluent in Spanish, he was also mentored younger students, was active in his school's Anti-Bullying Program and wrote for the school's newspaper.

**Talia Sarkesian**, who has graduated from Hope Technology High School, will attend Bryant University in the fall. Fluent in Armenian, as well as English, she is a member of the National Honor Society and graduated with a 4.0 GPA, ranking #1 in her class. A volunteer at Mt. Pleasant Library and the Big Sisters Program, as well as being a peer tutor in math and chemistry, she also participated in the Brown University Summer Program and the Moses Brown School Exchange Program. She plans to pursue a career in law.

**Melanie Serrano** took many AP courses at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. Transferring from Feinstein High, she excelled in her challenging course load and earned one of the top rankings in her class. Talented and versatile, Melanie will attend Fairfield University.

**Sharina Taveras Lopez** of the William B. Cooley Health, Science & Technology High School, will attend McDaniel College in Maryland this fall. A native of the Dominican Republic, she is fluent in Spanish as well as English, and was ranked #1 in her class. An intern for the State Senate, she was also a member of her school's Yearbook Committee and plans to pursue a career in broadcasting.

**Jessica Nietupski**, a graduate of Coventry High School, has been chosen as the Sons of Italy recipient of the Cianci Scholarship. A member of the National Honor Society and the National Italian Honor Society and ranking in the top 10 of her class, Jessica will attend the University of Rhode Island at Kingston, where she will major in Italian and secondary education.

Additionally, former Mayor Cianci presented 17 students with Dr. Vincent A. Cianci Book Awards for Excellence in Science, established in the 1970s in memory of his father. The following members of the Class of 2011 were chosen by faculty of their respective schools.

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## LASALLE ACADEMY

Matthew Jackson

Krista Hoffman

## HOPE ARTS ACADEMY

Lisa Choummalaithong

## HOPE TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY

Kaan Or

## CLASSICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Darlene Tat

Graham Griffin

## CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Vianchell Tiburcio

## PROVIDENCE CAREER &amp; TECHNICAL ACADEMY

Ann DeLeon

Richardo Guttierrez

## COOLEY HIGH

Brian Hernandez

## PROVIDENCE ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (PAIS)

Yeng Her

## MT. PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL

Vanessa Kanashara

## MOSES BROWN SCHOOL

Cody Chen

## ALVAREZ HIGH SCHOOL

Michael Vinas

## FEINSTEIN HIGH SCHOOL

Heidy Campos

## TIMES 2 ACADEMY'

Lauren Childress

## E CUBED ACADEMY

Saygbe Kamah

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