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Smithsonian Latino Center's Young Ambassadors Program Application Now Available Online

Applications are now available for the 2007 Young Ambassadors, a national leadership program for high school students gifted in the arts developed by the Smithsonian Latino Center to promote Latino culture and identity in the United States. High school seniors are invited to apply at <http://www.latino.si.edu/programs/youngambassadors.htm>. Online applications must be submitted electronically by March 22, and all other required documents and forms must be postmarked no later than March 22.

Now in its second year, the Young Ambassadors program includes a weeklong arts enrichment seminar at the Smithsonian Institution and a paid internship at a premier museum or cultural organization in local communities across the country. Upon completion of the program students will receive \$2,000 toward their college education.

Twenty graduating high school seniors with an interest and commitment to film, design, visual, performing or literary arts as it pertains to Hispanic culture will be selected by a panel comprised of museum partners. The selected students will travel to Washington, D.C., to spend a week at the Smithsonian Institution, immersed in a learning environment that will encourage them to examine Latino identity and embrace their cultural heritage through firsthand observation of the Smithsonian's Latino collections, behind-the-scenes tours and lectures by world-renowned artists and experts. After their week at the Smithsonian, they will return to cultural organizations in their communities for a paid, four-week summer internship to gain practical experience in the cultural field and have a hands-on opportunity to promote Latino heritage.

"The Young Ambassadors are the next generation of leaders in the arts and culture fields," said Pilar O'Leary, executive director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. "This program empowers high school students to be proud of their roots and reach out to educate the public in their own communities about how Latinos enrich America's cultural fabric, thus becoming true ambassadors of Latino culture in this country."

The 2006 Young Ambassadors came from California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Texas; they are now studying at prestigious institutions of higher learning around the world, such as Université de Paris – Sorbonne, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, University of South California, Northwestern University and the University of Pennsylvania, among others. During their week in Washington, they attended workshops with well-known Latino artists, like Angel Rodriguez-Diaz, author Nelly Rosario and award-winning film director Moctesuma Esparza. The students were honored at a congressional reception on Capitol Hill and at the Smithsonian Latino Center's *¡Smithsonian Con Sabor!* gala.

The Young Ambassadors program is open to students nationwide; the selected students must be able to travel to one of the following museums to fulfill the internship component:

- Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, Calif.
- The Wolfsonian - FIU in Miami
- The Carnival Center for the Performing Arts in Miami
- National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago
- National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, N.M.
- Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York City
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston
- The Alameda Museum in San Antonio
- Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C.
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C.

The Smithsonian Latino Center is a division of the Smithsonian Institution that ensures Latino contributions to art, science and the humanities are highlighted, understood and advanced through the development and support of public programs, scholarly research, museum collections and educational opportunities at the Smithsonian Institution and its affiliated organizations across the United States and internationally.

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