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Smithsonian Provides Summer Experience to Graduating High School Seniors *Young Ambassadors Program Focuses on Arts, Sciences and Humanities*

The Smithsonian Latino Center has selected 22 graduating high school seniors from throughout the country and Puerto Rico to participate in the Young Ambassadors Program, June 24 through Aug. 3. This interdisciplinary, leadership development program fosters the next generation of Latino leaders in the arts, sciences and humanities. Students spend a week in Washington attending seminars and skill-building workshops and participating in site visits to Smithsonian and area museums and cultural organizations. Each student then spends the next four weeks interning at a museum or cultural center in a local community.

This summer program encourages youth to explore and understand the Latino experience through visits to the Smithsonian's Latino collections and through personal interactions with Smithsonian experts, artists, journalists, scientists and other museum professionals. Special presenters include artist Christina Fernandez, filmmaker Alberto Ferreras, social media expert Elianne Ramos, science imager for the Chandra X-ray Observatory Joseph De Pascuale and Latino leaders such as Jose Zayas from the Department of Energy, Roel Campos of Locke Lorde LLP and The New America Alliance and Rocky Egusquiza of AARP, among others. The internship provides a hands-on opportunity to gain practical skills and promote Latino outreach at the local level. Participants represent nine states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico and include aspiring anthropologists, artists, scientists, health and medicine leaders, civic and community leaders, diplomats, designers and engineers. In addition to their academic achievements, these students have demonstrated civic responsibility and community service. The Young Ambassadors Program is made possible through the support of the Ford Motor Co. Fund and Community Services, the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Co.

“One of our goals has always been to offer learning opportunities to Latino students so they can contribute to the advancement of their communities,” said Joedis Avila, community outreach

manager, Ford Motor Co. Fund and Community Services. “We are proud to support these Young Ambassadors for the fifth year in a row and trust that their week in Washington and their respective internships prove to be fruitful in their educational and professional careers and beyond.”

“Unlocking the mysteries of the universe, understanding and sustaining a biodiverse planet, valuing world cultures and understanding the American experience are the Smithsonian’s four Grand Challenges, said Eduardo Díaz, director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. “Our Young Ambassadors Program addresses these goals by providing a rich and culturally relevant experience to these high school seniors.”

The following organizations will host interns for this year’s Young Ambassadors Program: Museum of Latin American Art (Calif.), California Science Center, Chabot Space and Science Center (Calif.), Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (Fla.), Miami Science Museum, National Museum of Mexican Art (Ill.), Adler Planetarium (Ill.), National Hispanic Cultural Center (NM), Explora (NM), Arizona Science Center, National Museum of the American Indian—George Gustav Heye Center (NY), Philadelphia Museum of Art, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, Austin Children’s Museum (Texas), San Antonio Museum of Art, International Museum of Art and Science (Texas), Fort Worth Museum of Science and History (Texas), Talento Bilingüe de Houston, Children’s Museum of Houston (Texas), National Museum of the American Indian (DC) and The Museum of Flight (Wash.).

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 and its affiliated organizations across the United States and internationally. For information about the Young Ambassadors Program visit www.latino.si.edu.

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