

FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Raychel George, (407) 246-7110, georger@floridaliteracy.org

FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION ANNOUNCES ANNUAL FLORIDA LITERACY AWARD WINNERS

ORLANDO, Florida (May 21, 2010) – The [Florida Literacy Coalition](#) recently recognized three organizations and three individuals for their commitment and dedication to increasing adult and family literacy in the state of Florida. The awards were presented at a special banquet held during the annual [Florida Literacy Conference](#) in Captiva, Fla.

“It is crucial to highlight the efforts of these award winners,” said Greg Smith, Executive Director of the Florida Literacy Coalition. “Their hard work and dedication best illustrates the impact and importance of our literacy programs throughout the state.”

In all, six awards were presented during the banquet. Bank of America (Central Florida) was recognized as an **Outstanding Business Partner** for their leadership and significant contributions to support Orlando’s Adult Literacy League. Through grants and program training, the organization has raised the profile of adult education and literacy in Central Florida.

The *Gainesville Sun* was honored as an **Outstanding Media Partner** for their outstanding, innovative and effective coverage of literacy issues. The company has been a driving force behind the area’s Annual Family Literacy Festival, and provides the Alachua County Literacy Network with a regular meeting space, administrative support

(more)

and free advertising for volunteer recruitment.

Marion County's Literacy Council received the **Excellence in Education** award as an organization demonstrating outstanding achievement in adult and family literacy education. The council has doubled the number of adult students it services in the past two years and has a dedicated volunteer base of more than 80 tutors. The organization has come a long way from its beginnings in the founder's garage in 1999.

Cherie Byrnes of Citrus County was recognized with the **Outstanding Literacy Volunteer** award for her efforts with the Citrus County Library System. Byrnes has demonstrated exceptional service and commitment to tutoring and program operations, and was instrumental in launching the library's first English language classes.

Nancy Tamayo de Galdez, an adult student from Palm Beach County, was honored with the **Flight for Freedom Award** for her extraordinary accomplishments in improving her literacy skills. A single, working mother, Tamayo de Galdez started learning English as a second language in 2007. Over than past three years she has volunteered hundreds of hours with the local literacy academy and other community organizations. She also is currently attending Kaiser College to become a medical assistant.

Margaret Anne Wheeler of Polk County was recognized with the **Mary J. Brogan Leadership Award** for upholding the highest standards of excellence, dedication, leadership and creativity for her literacy work in Polk County for more than two decades. Wheeler is revered as a role model for others, an ambassador for excellence in education and an advocate for the adult learner.

Smith and Zelda Rogers, state program director for adult education of the Florida

(more)

Department of Education, presented each award winner with an engraved glass award, and personally thanked and congratulated them for their active role in supporting literacy.

About the Florida Literacy Conference

The 26th annual [Florida Literacy Conference](#), “Open Books Open Minds,” took place May 5-7, at the South Seas Island Resort in Captiva, Fla. The conference offered a diverse selection of interactive workshops led by literacy experts on a variety of topics including adult basic education, literacy, English for speakers of other languages and family literacy. Sponsors of the 2010 Florida Literacy Conference included the Florida Department of Education, Dollar General Literacy Foundation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Publix Super Markets Charities, Florida TechNet and Walmart.

About the Florida Literacy Coalition

Established in 1985, The [Florida Literacy Coalition](#) (FLC) promotes, supports and advocates the effective delivery of quality adult and family literacy services in the state of Florida. As a statewide umbrella literacy organization and the host of Florida’s State Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, FLC provides a range of services to support more than 300 adult education, literacy and family literacy providers throughout Florida. Special emphasis is placed on assisting community-based literacy organizations with training and program development needs. For more information about the FLC call (407) 246-7110 or visit www.floridaliteracy.org.

Photography

2010 Florida Literacy Award Winners (L-R): Kristin Bash, Gainesville Sun; Margaret Anne Wheeler; Cherie Byrnes; Marisol Sepulveda and Karen Hill, Marion County Literacy Council; Carla Brosy and Barbara Travis, Bank of America-Sanibel; Julia Clark, on behalf of Nancy Tamayo de Galdez

#