

GOOD MORNING MADAM CHAIRWOMAN,  
COMMISSIONERS, FELLOW RESIDENTS...

LET'S START THIS MORNING WITH A CELEBRATION  
OF THE TALENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR  
YOUNG PEOPLE HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BY  
ANNOUNCING THE MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS  
FOR JANUARY.

AS WITH PREVIOUS WINNERS, THESE YOUNG  
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN NOMINATED IN THE AREAS OF  
LEADERSHIP, SCHOLARSHIP, AND OVERALL  
EXCELLENCE.

NOT ONLY HAVE THEY EXCEPTIONAL ABILITIES IN  
THESE AREAS...

BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY EMBODY THE  
DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS

AND THEY'RE MAKING OUR COMMUNITY A BETTER  
PLACE TO LIVE.

I INVITE YOU TO READ THEIR PROFILES IN THE  
HALL OF STARS FEATURED ON MY WEBSITE.

AND NOW MADAME CHAIR, THIS MONTH'S MAYOR'S  
SHINING SCHOLARS:

OUR EMERGING LEADER IS PATRICIA PASSWATERS  
- A SENIOR AT CORAL GABLES SENIOR HIGH  
SCHOOL WHO LIVES IN CHAIRWOMAN SOSA'S  
DISTRICT.

PATRICIA IS QUITE THE WRITER AND JOURNALIST!

FOUNDER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF HER SCHOOL'S  
ONLINE NEWSPAPER - CAVSCONNECT.COM...

SHE OVERSEES A STAFF OF 32 STUDENTS...

ENSURING THAT DAILY POSTS ARE ACCURATE,  
CURRENT, AND RELEVANT.

SHE'S AN EDITOR FOR THE LITERARY MAGAZINE...

PRESIDENT OF THE JOURNALISM HONOR  
SOCIETY...

TREASURER OF THE CREATIVE WRITING CLUB...

AND A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL HONOR  
SOCIETY.

PATRICIA IS AN ELECTED OFFICIAL AS WELL,  
SERVING AS STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT.

AS PRESIDENT, SHE HAS COORDINATED A SUMMER  
CAMP FOR INCOMING STUDENTS...

ORGANIZED RECRUITMENT FROM SIX MIDDLE SCHOOLS...

AND CARRIED OUT HER SCHOOL'S UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN.

IN ALL SHE DOES, PATRICIA IS A WONDERFUL ROLE MODEL TO THE ENTIRE STUDENT BODY.

NEXT YEAR SHE HOPES TO ATTEND A UNIVERSITY THAT HAS A RECOGNIZED COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM.

OUR UNSTOPPABLE SCHOLAR IS MARIA TASCAN, A SENIOR AT ALONZO AND TRACY MOURNING SENIOR HIGH BISCAYNE BAY, WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER HEYMAN'S DISTRICT.

MARIA WENT FROM NOT BEING INTERESTED IN SCHOOL, TO TURNING HER ACADEMIC LIFE AROUND...

FROM REGULAR CLASSES, TO HONORS AND AP.

SHE BECAME INVOLVED AS THE STATE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE CAREER EDUCATION CLUBS OF FLORIDA...

MAKING HER THE FIRST STUDENT IN HER SCHOOL'S HISTORY TO BECOME A STATE OFFICER FOR A STUDENT ORGANIZATION.

SHE LATER RAN FOR PRESIDENT OF HER SCHOOL'S ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM AND WON.

MARIA WAS CHOSEN AS ONE OF ONLY TWO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MIAMI INTER-CONTINENTAL HOTEL ACADEMY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM...

SPENDING FOUR MONTHS LEARNING ABOUT HOTEL OPERATIONS.

MARIA NOW SPEAKS REGULARLY TO STUDENTS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING INVOLVED AND HOW HER EXPERIENCES HAVE CHANGED HER LIFE.

SHE PLANS TO MAJOR IN MARKETING WITH A FOCUS IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE.

AND, OUR PURSUER OF EXCELLENCE IS SOPHIA G. PEREIRA, A NINTH GRADER AT CARROLLTON SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART, WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER BELL'S DISTRICT.

SOPHIA TRULY LIVES UP TO THE MEANING OF HER NAME BY HAVING A 4.0 GPA!

A MEMBER OF THE DEBATE TEAM, SHE WAS AWARDED THE OUTSTANDING YOUTH AWARD BY THE UNITED WAY.

SOPHIA CHOSE TO BECOME A VEGETARIAN AT THE AGE OF 10 BECAUSE OF HER LOVE FOR ANIMALS.

SHE IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRIEND CIRCLE, A PROGRAM DEDICATED TO OFFERING FRIENDSHIP AND ACCEPTANCE TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS REGARDLESS OF THEIR DISABILITY...

SHE VOLUNTEERS WITH THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER MIAMI, VISITING SICK CHILDREN AND ADULTS, AND DELIVERING FOOD TO THE NEEDY.

SOPHIA ALSO STAYS ACTIVE...

SHE PLAYS JV VOLLEYBALL AT HER SCHOOL AND LEAGUE BASKETBALL WITH THE TEMPLE BETH AM TEAM.

IN ACADEMICS, SERVICE, AND SPORTS, SOPHIA PURSUES AND ACHIEVES EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING SHE DOES.

MADAME CHAIR, PLEASE JOIN ME IN CONGRATULATING THESE SHINING EXAMPLES OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S BRIGHT FUTURE...

LET'S GIVE OUR MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS A ROUND OF APPLAUSE!