

FELLOW RESIDENTS, MR. CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS.

GOOD MORNING TO YOU ALL.

IT'S MY PLEASURE TO BEGIN TODAY BY RECOGNIZING THE MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY...

THIS IS OUR OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY IN THE AREAS OF LEADERSHIP, SCHOLARSHIP, AND OVERALL EXCELLENCE.

AS WITH PAST WINNERS, THEIR PROFILES ARE FEATURED ON MY WEBSITE...

AND I INVITE ALL OF YOU TO VISIT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM.

NOW, WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, THE MAYOR'S SHINING SCHOLARS FOR JANUARY:

OUR EMERGING LEADER IS TROY TELLO – A SENIOR AT FELIX VARELA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER BARREIRO'S DISTRICT.

TROY HAS MERGED HIS ACADEMIC TALENTS WITH HIS PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

HE JOINED THE BORN FREE FOUNDATION AND EARTH CLUB WHERE HE VOLUNTEERED TO HELP PROTECT THREATENED SPECIES IN THE WILD AND COLLECT FOOD FOR ANIMALS WAITING TO BE ADOPTED.

TROY ALSO VOLUNTEERED WITH ZOO MIAMI AND THE LITTLE CAESARS FOOD TRUCK, ACCUMULATING OVER 350 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.

HE ALSO PLAYED FOOTBALL, RAN THE TRACK TEAM AT HIS SCHOOL AND WAS AWARDED MOST VALUABLE PLAYER IN THE MIAMI RUGBY KIDS YOUTH DIVISION.

WHILE PARTICIPATING IN ALL OF THOSE EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, HE MANAGED TO HAVE A PERFECT ATTENDANCE LAST YEAR.

THIS YEAR, TROY WAS NOMINATED FOR THE POSSE SCHOLARSHIP, ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE AND RENOWNED COLLEGE ACCESS AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE NATION.

LET'S GIVE TROY A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE!

OUR UNSTOPPABLE SCHOLAR IS JUAN CARLOS DE LA LASTRA – A JUNIOR AT PINECREST PREPARATORY ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER ZAPATA’S DISTRICT.

JC’S DEDICATION TO THE ARTS HAS INSPIRED HIM TO STAY IN SCHOOL AND GET BETTER GRADES IN ORDER TO PURSUE HIS LOVE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY.

HE CREATED A SERIES ENTITLED “HOODZ”, WHERE HE COMBINED THE LEGACIES OF ROSA PARKS AND TRAYVON MARTIN AND TODAY THEY ARE PART OF THE PERMANENT COLLECTION AT TROY UNIVERSITY’S ROSA PARKS MUSEUM.

HIS WORK REFLECTS CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING HIS GENERATION AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE, AND HIS OUTSTANDING PIECES HAVE MADE HIM THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 PEACE FLAGS IN THE WIND SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS.

HE HOPES TO GO TO ART SCHOOL IN NEW YORK CITY AND ASPIRES TO CHANGE THE WORLD ONE PICTURE AT A TIME.

JC IS TRULY AN INSPIRATION FOR OTHERS TO SEE ART AS A ROAD FOR PERSONAL GROWTH.

PLEASE HELP ME GIVE JC A BIG HAND!

AND, OUR PURSUER OF EXCELLENCE IS STEFANY NICASTRI – A SENIOR AT DORAL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WHO LIVES IN COMMISSIONER DIAZ’S DISTRICT.

IN ADDITION TO MAINTAINING A GPA OF 5.4 STEFANY VOLUNTEERS WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY’S ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE BASS MUSEUM OF ART, AND TEAM TOMORROW, WHERE SHE DEVOTES HER TIME PACKING CARE PACKAGES FOR TROOPS AND SERVING THANKSGIVING MEALS TO THE HOMELESS.

SHE IS ALSO THE VICE PRESIDENT OF RHO KAPPA AND THE SOCIAL STUDIES HONOR SOCIETY, AS WELL AS THE TREASURER OF THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY.

AS A JUNIOR, STEFANY JOINED A DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM AT THE ACADEMY FOR ADVANCED ACADEMICS AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, WHERE SHE TAKES AP, HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES.

STEFANY STRIVES TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TOP OF HER CLASS WITH AN ASSOCIATE IN ARTS DEGREE FROM FIU.

TROY, JUAN CARLOS, STEFANY – YOU AND YOUR FELLOW SHINING SCHOLARS SHOW THAT OUR FUTURE IS INDEED BRIGHT.

GOD BLESS YOU AND WE WISH YOU MUCH CONTINUED SUCCESS!

MR. CHAIR, PLEASE JOIN ME IN CONGRATULATING JANUARY’S SHINING SCHOLARS!

