

profit charitable education organization which incorporates successful business strategies to combat social ills and problems that face young people.

At a time when parents and community leaders are watching our young people with new eyes, wondering what is going on inside their minds and what motivates them, this recognition is concrete proof that the community surrounding Oliviera Middle School—educators, counselors, parents, business people, and most importantly, students themselves—is working together to ward off the problems that have plagued other schools and other young people. The winning ingredient here is the active involvement of the students. The best messenger for young people is other young people.

We have enormous challenges before us in education, and with regard to the public policy in our public schools. There will never be one single answer to preparing young people to withstand the complex social issues that our children encounter each day. But the best way to prepare our children to deal with the society in which we live is to teach them, from very early on, simple moral guidelines to apply to their lives. The “Set a Good Example” program follows up as encouragement and reinforcement to these lessons.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Oliviera Middle School for their efforts to be part of a solution, which is the first step to solving the problem. I thank the young people there for leading the way to better grades and healthier attitudes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2000*

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on business and unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 187. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

HONORING OUTSTANDING  
NATIONAL HISPANIC YOUTH

**HON. RANDY “DUKE” CUNNINGHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 18, 2000*

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize six students from San Diego County, California, who have been selected as finalists competing for National Hispanic Youth Awards. These students are among sixty finalists nationally. One of the six is a student in my 51st Congressional District, Milenka V. Meneses of San Marcos High School.

These outstanding Hispanic young people have been identified for their superior academic achievement, their leadership in their schools and their communities, and for their promise as positive role models for us all. If we believe that in America, every young person, from every ethnic background, deserves a fighting chance to achieve the American Dream, we need young people from every ethnic background to take the initiative to lead the way.

Young people like Milenka Meneses are such leaders. They deserve our recognition, our honor, and our encouragement.

I commend to my colleagues to read the following article from the San Diego Union-Tribune describing the recognition given to these fine young men and women. They are more than promising young leaders to the Hispanic community; they are young leaders for us all. They represent the best of America.

SIX LOCAL STUDENTS CHOSEN AS LATINO  
LEADER FINALISTS

Six San Diego County high school students have been selected as finalists in a nationwide search for top Latino youth leaders.

They will be among 60 students from across the nation competing for six National Hispanic Youth awards. The winners will be recognized at the Hispanic Heritage Awards annual gala Sept. 7 at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

The six county residents selected to compete for the national awards are: Seidy Gaytan of Sweetwater Union High School; Laura Dawn Berumen of Montgomery High School; Abel Aramburo of El Cajon Valley High School; Milenka V. Meneses of San Marcos High School; Jose Barraza Jr. of Hilltop High School; and Danika Marie Lacarra Markey of Helix High School.

Because they were named regional finalists, each student received a \$1,000 educational grant, a personal computer from CompUSA and a \$500 donation to a community service organization of their choice.

The Hispanic Heritage Awards Foundation was established 14 years ago to provide a greater understanding of the contributions of Hispanic Americans in the United States and to recognize and honor role models who inspire Latino youth.