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The Florida Head Start Association Announces Seven State Recipients Advance as Region Winners

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TALLAHASSEE, FL – November 8, 2019 -The Florida Head Start Association (FHSA) is pleased to announce seven of their 2020 FHSA Annual Award recipients have received region recognition from the Region IV Head Start Association (RIVHSA).

State award winners were honored during the FHSA Annual Awards Luncheon in Daytona Beach, FL, on October 11, 2019. The FHSA Annual Awards promote excellence in the Head Start/Early Head Start community through recognition of employers, parents, alumni, volunteers, and partners who have made extraordinary contributions to their programs and exemplifies the highest quality of standards in their communities. Award winners serve as inspirational leaders to FHSA; they embody the core values of serving children and families and being committed to Head Start. The state winners advanced as Region finalists in their categories. Four FHSA State award recipients will be recognized at the RIVHSA 2020 Awards gala on February 20, 2020, in Atlanta, GA.

Parent of the Year – Maritza Vasquez from Orange County Head Start, Orlando

Support Staff of the Year – Parameshwari “Rani” Panchanathan from Miami- Dade Community Action and Human Services Department, Head Start/Early Head Start, Miami

Beating the Odds – Sharlene Singleton from Episcopal Children’s Services, Jacksonville

Corporate Award – Smart City, Orlando

The region also selected three of the FHSA National finalist.

Aubrey Puckett Memorial Award – Sonya L. Hill from Orange County Head Start, Orlando

Edward Zigler Innovation Award – Orange County Head Start, Orlando

Ron Herndon Head Start Parent Scholarship – Lara Urdaneta from Orange County Head Start, Orlando

National finalist advance to the National Head Start Association and will be selected by December 2019.

FHSA President Kymberly Cook said, "FHSA is extremely honored to have so many talented Head Start leaders recognized at the region level. It's a testament to the great staff, parents, alumni, volunteers, and community partners we have in the State of Florida who understand the importance of Head Start."

Each year the FHSA partners with RIVHSA to recognize the work and impact made within the Head Start community to provide a powerful vehicle for inspiring excellence, involving the community, and honoring their achievements.

About FHSA: The Florida Head Start Association is a non-profit organization working on behalf of the 43,000 children and families. Head Start Programs serve in Florida. FHSA has been the voice for Florida's most vulnerable children and families since 1999 and is committed to enhancing and supporting the capability of local Head Start programs in the delivery of high-quality services for our children and families.

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