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Deserving Hispanic Students Receive Travel Awards From Southwest Airlines and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)

70 exemplary Hispanic students will fly for free to their colleges this fall

DALLAS, Aug. 18 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Southwest Airlines, in conjunction with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), announced today the winners of "Lanzate", its annual educational travel award program. With more than 450 entries from all across the country, winners were selected on July 24 after intensive evaluation from a panel of judges formed by college professors and professionals from coast to coast. The 70 exemplary students chosen will receive free travel with no blackout dates, to any of the 64 cities Southwest Airlines flies. To access the list of winners, please link to: http://www.southwest.com/about_swa/press/2008_hacu_winners.html

These travel tickets were awarded to undergraduate and graduate Hispanic students with socio-economic need, who journey away from home to pursue a higher education. All of the participants submitted an essay that stated why they should get the award and the reasons that pushed them to pursue an advanced degree.

"For the past four years, in partnership with Southwest Airlines, we have helped to make the dream of a higher education possible for students by decreasing the barrier of distance," said Antonio Flores, President and Chief Executive Officer of HACU. "HACU takes great pride in the "Lanzate" program and the lives it continues to impact."

Southwest Airlines believes that education is the path to success. Through this partnership, Southwest and HACU are creating opportunities for dedicated students who decide to expand their comfort zone for a better future.

"Southwest Airlines understands the difficulties Hispanic students face away from home, away from their families. We want to be the bridge between their aspirations and the realization of those dreams. Keeping the families connected and in touch is an important factor for success in higher education," said Laura Nieto, Senior Manager of Southwest Airlines Corporate Community Affairs. "All of the applicants are already winners, not just for taking the first steps but for the endurance of staying in the race."

HACU, which has its national headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, represents more than 450 colleges and universities, including Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), which collectively serve more than two-thirds of all Hispanic higher education students in the United States. HACU's international membership includes leading higher education institutions in Latin America and in Spain.

"Even with scholarships, and a summer job on my part, it will still be difficult for my parents to provide transportation," said Petra Villegas, one of the winners of this program. "This award will not only help me reach my goals but also help my parents to be able to afford other necessary (family costs) while I am pursuing a higher education."

After 37 years of service, Southwest Airlines continues to offer the best value in airline travel, allowing Customers the opportunity to travel nonstop throughout the country at a very low fare. Southwest offers no fees for first or second checked bags, or for snacks or changes in personal travel itineraries. Since 1987, the airline has maintained the lowest ratio of Customer complaints to enplanements as published in the Department of Transportation's Air Travel Consumer Report. Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 64 cities in 32 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,400 flights a day and has more than 34,000 Employees systemwide.

<http://www.southwest.com>

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