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# **Southwest Airlines and Latino Art Beat Partner to Honor Hispanic Heritage Month**

**Southwest Airlines and Latino Art Beat will display award winning pieces in tribute to Latino youth talent**

DALLAS, Sept. 15 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- With three art expositions placed in Chicago's Midway Airport, Dallas Love Field, and at its corporate Headquarters, Southwest Airlines kicks off Hispanic Heritage month today, celebrating Latino art, youth, and their future. The art exhibition will consist of ten award winning pieces from Hispanic high school students from Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and Washington D.C. Since 1998, Latino Art Beat has awarded its competition winners more than \$1 million in college scholarships, monetary prizes, college credit courses, and Spanish language courses.

"As one of the top 60 diversity elite companies in the United States, Southwest Airlines has consistently shown it supports the Hispanic community," said Jena Atchison, Segment Marketing Manager for Southwest Airlines. "Hispanic Heritage month celebrates talent and perseverance, and we are delighted to be part of a program that honors these extraordinary Latinos."

The display will run from today until October 15, 2008, when the local Southwest Employees will gift the artwork to different non-profit organizations like the Ronald McDonald House.

"Through our national initiatives, Latino Art Beat helps shape our children's future today by offering them alternatives, encouraging higher education through scholarship awards, celebrating heritage through their artistic talents, and better preparing them for their future job opportunities," said Don Rossi Nuccio, President of Latino Art Beat. "By profiling these talented young artists through Southwest Airlines airport displays in Chicago and Dallas, we are not only celebrating their wonderful artwork but encouraging their future success."

Latino Art Beat's annual art competition for high school students is held in May of each year. The theme is "What Hispanic Heritage & Culture Means to Me." The competition categories are: Drawing & Painting, 3-D Artwork, 3-D Sculpture, Photography, Computer Generated Art, Film, and Animation. Five talented winners are selected each year and participate in exhibitions all across the country.

Southwest Airlines shares its passion for Hispanic Heritage Month with our internal and external Customers by hosting celebrations in our Hispanic focus markets. Local Employees kick off the festivities by partnering with local organizations, and at airports, with gate games, Mariachi music, authentic foods, and distributing commemorative T-shirts and lapel pins emblazoned with our Hispanic Heritage Month message "Celebremos Tu Herencia," "We Celebrate Your Heritage." Hispanic Heritage month posters also are on display during this month-long celebration. Finally, be on the lookout for Southwest's Hispanic Heritage Month specialty packaged peanuts!

With 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 charges no fees for first or second checked bags, or for pillows, blankets, or snacks. 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.

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