PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Two SFUSD Students Named U.S. Presidential Scholars

May 8, 2012 (San Francisco) – U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has announced the selection of two SFUSD students as 2012 U.S. Presidential Scholars.

Michelle Ang and Kelsey Lauritano, both students at Ruth Asawa School of the Arts (RASOTA), were among only 141 American high school seniors to be chosen. They are being recognized as two of only 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts in the US.

“They are two of the hardest working and focused students we have on campus, and that's saying a lot given the enormous talent of our student body,” says RASOTA Principal Carmelo Sgarlato. “We wish them the best in their future artistic endeavors.”

This year’s U.S. Presidential Scholars will be honored in Washington D.C., from June 16-19.

Kelsey Lauritano is attending The Juilliard School next year to study classical vocal performance. “I am extremely honored to represent the arts community in Washington, D.C.,” says Lauritano, a senior in the school’s Vocal department. “I also want to advocate for students in California who may be deprived of an arts education due to budget cuts.”

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, appointed by President Barack Obama, selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. According to the Commission, of the three million students expected to graduate from high school this year, more than 3,300 candidates qualified for the 2012 awards determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT and ACT exams, and through nominations made by Chief State School Officers or the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts nationwide YoungArts™ competition.

“Honoring Presidential Scholars is an important celebration of students showing the dedication, creativity and ambition to become future leaders,” said Duncan. “As national, state and local leaders work side by side with principals, teachers, and parents to make our schools better, we can learn from the students all around us whose hard work and accomplishments embody the kind of excellence we want every child to achieve.”

The 2012 Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large and 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

Created in 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored more than 6,000 of the nation’s top-performing students with the award given to honorees during the annual ceremony in D.C. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary and performing arts.

More information on the 2012 Presidential Scholars award.

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