

The Broad Foundation Announces 2012 Finalists for \$1 Million Broad Prize; Four School Districts Honored for Strongest Urban Student Gains

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 4, 2012

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LOS ANGELES - [The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation](#) announced today the finalists for the 2012 [Broad Prize for Urban Education](#), \$1 million awarded annually to the four urban school districts making the greatest progress in America in raising student achievement, particularly for traditionally disadvantaged students.

This year's four finalists are:

- Corona-Norco Unified School District in Southern California
- Houston Independent School District
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- The School District of Palm Beach County, Fla.

The Broad (rhymes with "road") Prize for Urban Education is the largest education award in the country given to urban school districts that demonstrate the best overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students.

The winner of the 2012 Broad Prize, to be announced on Tuesday, Oct. 23 in New York City at the Museum of Modern Art, will receive \$550,000 in college scholarships for high school seniors who will graduate in 2013. The three finalist districts will each receive \$150,000 in college scholarships, for a total distribution of \$1 million in Broad Prize scholarships.

"Urban school districts across this country have much more work to do to help students of all backgrounds thrive academically," said Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. "These four school districts can be proud that they are paving the way by demonstrating that students of all backgrounds can achieve if they are given equal opportunities to learn."

This year's finalists distinguished themselves from other large urban American school districts by producing better relative Hispanic and African-American student gains. For example:

- All made greater increases than other urban districts nationally in the number of Hispanic and African-American students taking the SAT, ACT and/or Advanced Placement tests between 2008 and 2011, and some simultaneously produced higher scores,
- In all finalist districts, the percentage of African-American and/or Hispanic students performing at the highest achievement levels on state reading, math and science exams ranked among the top of districts within their states (an indicator of particular note when comparing data across states whose tests vary in rigor), and
- Nearly all showed increases in graduation rates for African-American and Hispanic students that bested other large urban districts nationwide.

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The finalists were selected by a [review board](#) of 13 prominent education researchers, policy leaders, practitioners and executives from leading universities, education associations, civil rights advocates, think-tanks and foundations. The Broad Foundation does not play a role in selecting the finalists or the winner.

In choosing the finalists, the review board looks for the urban school districts that show the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students. Among the data they consider are SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement participation rates and outcomes, graduation rates, state assessments in reading, math and science, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, student demographics including poverty, state test rigor, per pupil expenditures and district size. The data they evaluate, which is publicly available, was compiled and analyzed by [MPR Associates, Inc.](#), a leading national education research consulting firm.

Seventy-five of the nation's largest urban school districts were automatically [eligible](#) and considered for The Broad Prize. School districts cannot apply or be nominated.

Two of this year's finalists are first-time finalists: Corona-Norco Unified School District in Riverside County, Calif. and The School District of Palm Beach County, Fla. The Houston Independent School District returns as a finalist after having won the award the inaugural year in 2002. This marks the fifth year Miami-Dade County Public Schools is a finalist—tying the record of Broad Prize winners Boston Public Schools and the Long Beach Unified School District.

Previous Broad Prize winners have been Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, N.C. (2011), Gwinnett County Public Schools outside Atlanta (2010), the Aldine Independent School District near Houston (2009), the Brownsville Independent School District in Texas (2008), the New York City Department of Education (2007), Boston Public Schools (2006), Norfolk Public Schools in Virginia (2005), the Garden Grove Unified School District in California (2004), the Long Beach Unified School District in California (2003) and the Houston Independent School District (2002).

Over the next two months, teams of educational researchers and practitioners led by the education consulting company [RMC Research Corporation](#) will conduct a four-day site visit in each finalist district using a research-based rubric for district quality to gather qualitative information, interview district administrators, conduct focus groups with teachers and principals and observe classrooms. The teams will also interview parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives. A [selection jury](#) of prominent individuals from business, industry, education and public service will then choose the winning school district after reviewing both the student achievement data and the qualitative site visit reports.

For more information about The Broad Prize, this year's finalists, the review board and selection jury, please visit www.broadprize.org. Previous Broad Prize data analyses are publicly available at www.broadprize.org/resources/75_districts.html, which will be updated this fall with the 2012 analyses.

Founded by self-made entrepreneur Eli Broad and his wife Edythe, both graduates of Detroit Public Schools, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation is a philanthropy that seeks to ensure that every student in an urban public school has the opportunity to succeed. Bringing together top education experts and practitioners, the foundation funds system-wide programs and policies that strengthen public schools by creating environments that allow good teachers to do great work and enable students of all backgrounds to learn and thrive. The Broad Foundation's Internet address is www.broadeducation.org, and updates are available on Twitter @broadfoundation.

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