



news release

**2011 Broad Prize Awarded to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools;  
North Carolina District Wins \$550,000 in Scholarships,  
Three Finalist Districts Each Win \$150,000**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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WASHINGTON – The winner of the 2011 Broad Prize for Urban Education—the large, urban school district that has shown the greatest student academic gains nationally—is Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation announced today. As the winner of the country’s largest education award for school districts, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will receive \$550,000 in college scholarships for its high school seniors. Three finalist school districts will also each receive \$150,000 in scholarships for their students.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan joined philanthropist Eli Broad and John Legend, GRAMMY® award winner and education reform activist, at the Library of Congress to announce the winner, which was selected by a bipartisan jury of seven prominent leaders from government, education, business and public service, including three former U.S. secretaries of education.

The \$1 million Broad (rhymes with “road”) Prize is an annual award that honors the four large urban school districts that demonstrate the strongest student achievement and improvement while narrowing achievement gaps between income and ethnic groups. The money goes directly to graduating high school seniors for college scholarships.

“Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a model for innovation in urban education,” U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said. “It has taken on the tough work of turning around low-performing schools, created a culture of using data to improve classroom instruction, and put a laser-like focus preparing students for college and careers.”

More than half of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s students are African-American or Hispanic, and more than half are eligible for subsidized lunches.

The three other finalists—Broward County Public Schools and Miami-Dade County Public Schools, both in Florida, and the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas—will each receive \$150,000 in college scholarships.

All four districts have previously been finalists for the award. Charlotte-Mecklenburg was a Broad Prize finalist in 2004 and 2010; Miami-Dade County was a finalist in 2006, 2007 and 2008; Broward County was a finalist in 2008 and 2009; and Ysleta was a finalist last year.

“By creatively supporting the most challenged schools with dollars and people and by empowering teachers to tailor instruction to student needs, Charlotte-Mecklenburg has produced truly impressive urban student achievement gap closures ,” said Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, which awards The Broad Prize. “We congratulate everyone—teachers, administrators, parents, students and the entire community—involved in the district’s success.”

Among the reasons Charlotte-Mecklenburg stands out among the 75 largest urban school districts in America:

- **Narrowed ethnic achievement gaps.** In recent years, Charlotte-Mecklenburg has narrowed achievement gaps between African-American and white students in reading and math at all school levels (elementary, middle and high school). For example, from 2007 to 2010, achievement gaps between African-American and white students decreased by 11 percentage points in high school reading. In addition, Charlotte-Mecklenburg narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic and white students in math at all school levels, and in middle and high school reading.
- **Narrowed ethnic achievement gaps faster.** In recent years, the pace at which Charlotte-Mecklenburg narrowed achievement gaps between African-American and white students was among the fastest third of North Carolina districts in elementary and high school reading and math. In addition, the pace at which Charlotte-Mecklenburg narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic and white students was among the fastest third of North Carolina districts in math at all school levels and in middle and high school reading.
- **Boosted percentage of low-income students performing at high levels.** In recent years, Charlotte-Mecklenburg increased the percentage of low-income students who performed at the highest achievement level (Level IV) in middle and high school reading and math faster than other North Carolina districts. For example, between 2007 and 2010, the percentage of low-income students performing at the highest achievement level increased an average of 6 percentage points per year in high school math compared with an average of 2 percentage points per year for other North Carolina districts.
- **Demonstrated strong college readiness levels.** In 2010, 62 percent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s African-American seniors participated in the SAT exam. This marked the highest SAT participation rate for African-American seniors among all 75 large urban school districts eligible for The Broad Prize.

Given changes in urban and suburban demographics over the last decade, The Broad Foundation narrowed the eligibility and selection requirements for The Broad Prize this year to ensure an equal comparison of large urban school districts. As a result, 75 districts that serve significant percentages of low-income and minority students were automatically eligible and considered for The Broad Prize. Districts cannot apply for or be nominated for this award.

For a full electronic press kit, including additional student outcomes, policies and practices that made Charlotte-Mecklenburg stand out among the largest districts in the country, as well as for details on all the finalists, please visit [www.broadprize.org](http://www.broadprize.org).

The selection jury that chose this year's winner included:

- **Henry Cisneros**, executive chairman of CityView companies, former president of Univision and former U.S. secretary of housing and urban development
- **Susan Hockfield**, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Shirley Ann Jackson**, president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and former chair of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- **Roderick Paige**, former U.S. secretary of education
- **Richard W. Riley**, former U.S. secretary of education and former governor of South Carolina
- **Margaret Spellings**, president and CEO of Margaret Spellings and Company and former U.S. secretary of education
- **Andrew L. Stern**, president emeritus of Service Employees International Union

The selection jury evaluated quantitative data on the finalists, consisting of publicly available student performance data compiled and analyzed by MPR Associates, Inc., a leading national education research consulting firm. In addition, the jury evaluated the four finalist districts' policies and practices, based on site visits, classroom observations, and interviews with administrators, teachers, principals, parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives. . The site visits were conducted by a team of education practitioners led by RMC Research Corporation, an education consulting company.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg was selected as a finalist this past spring by a review board of 21 prominent education researchers, policy leaders, practitioners and executives from leading universities, national education associations, think-tanks and foundations that evaluated publicly available student performance data.

Because Charlotte-Mecklenburg won this year's Broad Prize, its high school seniors who graduate in 2012 will be eligible for \$550,000 in college scholarships. Broad Prize scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate significant financial need and show a record of academic improvement during their high school career. Scholarship recipients who enroll in four-year colleges will receive up to \$20,000 paid out over four years (\$5,000 per year). Broad Prize scholars who enroll in two-year colleges will receive up to \$5,000 scholarships paid out over two years (\$2,500 per year). For more information on the scholarship program, please visit: [http://www.broadprize.org/scholarship\\_program/overview.html](http://www.broadprize.org/scholarship_program/overview.html).

The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation is a national philanthropy established by entrepreneur Eli Broad that invests in the bold and innovative transformation of K-12 urban public education in America so that students of all backgrounds are academically prepared for college, careers and life. The Broad Foundation supports efforts to empower students and teachers to succeed in the classroom, use resources strategically and efficiently, and attract talented Americans into the profession. The Broad Foundation's Internet address is [www.broadeducation.org](http://www.broadeducation.org).

**Note: An archived webcast of the event will be accessible today after 2 p.m. ET at [www.broadprize.org](http://www.broadprize.org). Photos of the event will be available on [www.broadprize.org/mediacenter/photos/2011.html](http://www.broadprize.org/mediacenter/photos/2011.html) after 4 p.m. ET today.**

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