



EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
Date: August 2010

Contact: Adam Segal • 202-422-4673 • [media@hispanichealth.org](mailto:media@hispanichealth.org)  
Ron Rogers • 908-423-6449 • [ronald\\_rogers@merck.com](mailto:ronald_rogers@merck.com)

## **Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Hispanic Scholars Chosen: Program Supports Future Leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Fields**

*Program Confers 10 Alliance/Merck Ciencia Scholar Awards and 25 Ciencia National Scholarships to Hispanic Students*

WASHINGTON, DC – Ten Hispanic students beginning their college careers this coming fall were announced as the Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholars. In addition, the Alliance announced that 25 Hispanic college students majoring in a STEM field are recipients of a \$2,000 *Ciencia* National Scholarship to help them complete their education.

“These students will redefine the frontiers of science. I have no doubt they will be the next generation of Nobel prize winners, lab directors, professors, and health professionals leading scientific discovery that improves our health and well-being,” said Dr. Jane L. Delgado, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Hispanic Health.

According to Dr. Carlo Parravano, executive director of MISE, “The Merck Institute’s ultimate goal is to improve student performance and participation in science. With our investment, these scholarships, summer lab experiences, and mentorship opportunities can increase Hispanic college graduation rates in STEM fields. The effort is critical to achieving an inclusive science community and fostering the next generation of discovery.”

Each Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholar recipient will major in a STEM field and will receive up to \$42,500 in college scholarship and summer research internship support over the next four years.

The *Ciencia* Scholars and National Scholarship recipients are remarkable with aspirations that range from pioneering innovative assistive technology to improving standards of living in third world countries. Their stories include:

- Listening to an NPR Morning Edition show on global warming and greenhouse effects and being motivated to commit to a career in environmental research;
- Starting a graphic design and computer repair business to launch his career in computer science;
- Helping a neighbor in a serious accident and seeking a career in medicine;
- Obtaining a pharmacy technician certification as the first step in a pharmacology career;
- Being the only female in her electronics class fuels the desire to study electrical engineering and specialize in renewable energy to conserve natural resources for future generations;
- Pursuing a degree in civil engineering to improve standards of living in Latin American countries;
- Listening to a dentist who visited her class inspires a student to study dentistry and provide her family and other low-income families with the dental care they never received;
- Volunteering to help disabled people inspires a student to design and create innovative assistive technology to improve lives.

These are some of the stories of the Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholar Award and National Scholarship recipients (please see attached bios). The program is made possible by a \$4 million grant from The Merck Company Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Merck, a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. This is the largest grant to date that The Merck Company Foundation has made to the field of Hispanic education. The Alliance, along with its supporting arm, the Health Foundation for the Americas, is partnering with the Merck Institute for Science Education (MISE) to implement the program.

Today's announcement marked the second of five groups of Alliance/Merck *Ciencia* Scholars and *Ciencia* National Scholarship recipients. Over the next four years, the program will have provided a total of 50 promising Hispanic high school students from Brownsville, TX; Elizabeth, NJ; and Los Angeles, CA with up to \$42,500 in college scholarships and summer research internship support to pursue STEM degrees (up to \$20,000 in scholarship, and up to \$22,500 in internship support). The program will also feature mentorship opportunities and an annual *Ciencia* Scholars symposium. In addition, over the next four years, a total of 125 Hispanic college students with a declared major in a STEM field will have received \$2,000 scholarships. More information is available at [www.AllianceScholars.org](http://www.AllianceScholars.org).

###

### **About the National Alliance for Hispanic Health**

The National Alliance for Hispanic Health (the Alliance) is the nation's foremost science-based source of information and trusted advocate for Hispanic health and well-being. The Alliance represents thousands of Hispanic health providers across the nation and provides services to more than 15 million annually, making a daily difference in the lives of Hispanic communities and families. For more information, call the Alliance's *Su Familia* National Hispanic Family Health Helpline at 1-866-783-2645 or visit [www.hispanichealth.org](http://www.hispanichealth.org).

### **About the Health Foundation for the Americas**

The Health Foundation for the Americas (HFA) is the support organization for the National Alliance for Hispanic Health. HFA encourages philanthropy that invests in the human and social capital of community-based organizations that deliver innovative solutions for health and well-being in the Americas. For more information, visit [www.healthyamericas.org](http://www.healthyamericas.org).

### **About the Merck Institute for Science Education**

Created in 1993, the Merck Institute for Science Education (MISE), an award-winning program, improves science education and raises the levels of science performance for students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. MISE is funded through a 15-year, \$38 million commitment from the Merck Company Foundation. Now expanded to include college and graduate-level education, MISE works to build capacity in the biomedical sciences through partnerships with higher education institutions. For more information, visit [www.mise.org](http://www.mise.org).

### **About the Merck Company Foundation**

The Merck Company Foundation is a U.S.-based, private, charitable foundation. Established in 1957 by the global research-driven pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. Inc., the Foundation is funded entirely by the Company and is Merck's chief source of funding support to qualified, non-profit, charitable organizations. Since its inception, the Merck Company Foundation contributed more than \$524 million to support important initiatives that address societal needs consistent with Merck's overall mission to enhance the health and well-being of people around the world. For more information, visit [www.merckcompanyfoundation.org](http://www.merckcompanyfoundation.org).