



For Immediate Release

Media Contacts:

Star Kraschinsky, 407-513-3456, skraschinsky@FLVS.net
Tania Clow, 407-513-3627, tclow@flvs.net

Florida Virtual School® Student Places Third in Florida’s Celebrate Literacy Week PSA Contest

Orlando, Fla. (Jan. 27, 2012) – Florida Virtual School (FLVS®) is thrilled to share that high school student Brendan Santidrian placed third in the Florida Department of Education (DOE) statewide Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! Public Service Announcement (PSA) contest for the high school division! Santidrian was recognized at an awards ceremony on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2012, during Celebrate Literacy Week at Daytona International Speedway.

Santidrian, who attends Schoolhouse Preparatory School in Miami, Fla. and is currently taking Spanish and Algebra II with FLVS, was the FLVS high school contest winner. The FLVS Literacy Team submitted his PSA to the state competition. Santidrian was among hundreds that entered an entertaining and informative 30-second PSA to promote and encourage literacy. View Santidrian’s PSA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YoQNV2CxIc>.

According to his mother, Yolanda Leonard, the autistic 18-year-old taught himself his video skills. Before he could enter the contest, however, he needed to know what a PSA was. To help him deal with loud sounds, starting at a young age, his mom took him to movies to help desensitize him. The movie previews, although especially loud, drew his interest immediately. She explained that a PSA was like those previews – fast, exciting and attention grabbing.

Unsure if he needed an acceptance speech, Santidrian prepared one and shared it with FLVS: “I would like to thank Florida Virtual School for the opportunity to show my talents. I have always loved movies and used movie trailers as my inspiration for my PSA to promote literacy. After I graduate, I want to go to film school and specialize in editing.”

“We honor Brendan and his passion to do what he loves,” said Christine Harris, literacy team program manager for FLVS. “We are so excited that we were able to contribute and provide the platform for him to share his talent. It’s a perfect opportunity to show others, no matter the struggle, you can persevere.”

The PSA contest was part of the week-long celebration that highlighted Florida’s focus on literacy and reading. Florida First Lady Ann Scott joined Deputy Director of the DOE Office of Early Learning Kevin Smith, Florida Lottery Secretary Cynthia O’Connell, Volusia County Schools Superintendent Dr. Margaret Smith and Scholastic and NASCAR partner representatives at Daytona International Speedway for the announcement of the winners.

About Florida Virtual School

Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is an established leader in developing and providing virtual Kindergarten- 12 education solutions to students all over Florida, the United States and the world. A nationally recognized e-Learning model and recipient of numerous awards, FLVS was founded in 1997 and was the country’s first, state-

wide Internet-based public high school. Today, FLVS serves students in Kindergarten-12th grades and provides a variety of custom solutions for schools and districts to meet student needs.

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Brendan Santidrian shows his award!

