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Tampa Leaders Honored at Scientology Open House

| Tampa • August 8, 2012 | The Church of Scientology of Tampa honored five civic leaders August 4 at a special open house held in honor of International Day of Friendship. The Church presented awards to Shannon Edge, Maria Asuncion Lopez, Sam Mobley, Dr. Wallace Reyes, and Pastor Essie Sims for their work to make a difference in the Tampa Bay community.

Shannon Edge has served as director of the Neighborhood and Community Relations Office of the City of Tampa since 2003. Her office works with Tampa neighborhood and civic associations and provides a liaison between residents and city government, helping people resolve issues, find information and connect with city agencies that offer the services they need.

Maria Asuncion Lopez is president of the Hispanic Alliance of Tampa Bay and founder and president of Voz y Acción de Puerto Rico, a nonprofit organization established to improve community interaction. Maria also heads LPNet—the Latino Professionals Network—which creates career, educational and social opportunities for Hispanic professionals.

Sam Mobley, president of the Eastern Heights Neighborhood Association, secured a Hillsborough County neighborhood grant to upgrade community facilities and regularly leads anti-drug marches through East Tampa to bring police attention to suspected drug dealers, making the neighborhood safe for local families and *unsafe* for criminals.

Ybor City historian Dr. Wallace Reyes conducts tours of local historic buildings, thus helping to preserve the heritage of the city by educating residents and visitors on the history of the region.

Pastor Essie Sims, Senior Pastor of Telling the Truth Ministries, is chairman of East Tampa Community Revitalization Partnership, which provides activities and opportunities for East Tampa youth such as midnight basketball and dances through the East Tampa Have a Safe Summer events program. His work with the National Football League Youth Education Town (NFL YET)—an educational and recreational center operated by the Boys and Girls Club of America on behalf of the National Football League—provides activities and opportunities for East Tampa youth.

During the awards presentation and throughout the day, the Church of Scientology Tampa introduced those attending the open house to *The Way to Happiness*, a nonreligious moral code written by L. Ron Hubbard and based entirely on common sense. The booklet and brief informational videos that illustrate its precepts provide a roadmap to a happier life through compassion and understanding, virtues essential to accomplishing the purpose of International Day of Friendship—to foster friendship between peoples, countries,

cultures and individuals to inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities.

To learn more about the Church of Scientology Tampa, visit their website at www.Scientology-Tampa.org.