



news release

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**2009 Broad Prize for Urban Education Awarded to
Aldine Independent School District;
Texas District Wins \$1 Million, Four Finalists Each Win \$250,000**

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WASHINGTON – The **Aldine Independent School District** (AISD) outside Houston won the 2009 **Broad Prize for Urban Education**, the largest education award in the country, and as a result will receive \$1 million in college scholarships, **The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation** announced today. Aldine, where four out of five students qualify for free and reduced-priced school lunch, has shown some of the most consistent student achievement gains nationally in the last decade and has been recognized as one of the top five most improved urban American school systems in four of the last six years.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and President Obama’s chief economic advisor and director of the National Economic Council, Larry Summers, joined philanthropist Eli Broad and members of Congress on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. to announce the winner. Aldine ISD was selected by a bipartisan **jury** of eight prominent American leaders from government, education, business and civic sectors, including three former U.S. secretaries of education.

The \$2 million Broad (rhymes with “road”) Prize is an annual award that honors the five 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.

As the winner of The Broad Prize, the Aldine Independent School District will receive \$1 million in college scholarships for graduating seniors next spring. The four finalists—Broward County Public Schools in southern Florida; Gwinnett County Public Schools outside Atlanta; the Long Beach Unified School District in California; and the Socorro Independent School District in Texas—will each receive \$250,000 in college scholarships. Long Beach won the 2003 Broad Prize, and this marked the third year that the former winner returned as a finalist. Broward is a two-time finalist for the award, while this was Gwinnett’s and Socorro’s first year in the running.

“Aldine deserves to celebrate today,” said Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, which sponsors The Broad Prize. “Aldine has demonstrated that when an entire community and district work together with a singular focus on educating every child, they can succeed, even against the odds of poverty. Their success holds valuable lessons for other urban districts trying to do the same.”

Among the **reasons Aldine stood out** this year among large urban school districts:

- **Outperformed other similar Texas districts.** In 2008, Aldine outperformed other districts in Texas that serve students with similar family incomes in reading and math at all grade levels (elementary, middle and high school), according to The Broad Prize methodology.
- **Demonstrated better performance by racial, ethnic and income subgroups.** In 2008, Aldine’s Hispanic and low-income students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in reading and math at all school levels. In addition, Aldine’s African-American students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in math at all school levels and in middle and high school reading.
- **Closed achievement gaps.** Despite the relatively small size of achievement gaps between its low- and non-low-income students, Aldine still made progress between 2005 and 2008 in closing income gaps over time in reading at all school levels and in elementary and middle school math. Aldine also narrowed the gaps between its African-American students and the state average for white students between 2005 and 2008. For example, during this time, the gap between these two groups narrowed by 14 percentage points in middle school math.
- **Broke the predictive power of poverty.** Family income level is typically a strong predictor of school performance nationally. However, Broad Prize data analysis shows that school-level poverty does not appear to be statistically related to student achievement in Aldine at any grade level in reading or math. High student achievement is just as likely in a low-income Aldine school as it is in a non-low-income school.
- **Demonstrated strong district-wide policies and practices.** The district’s comprehensive curricular and instructional system sets clear, rigorous expectations for teachers and principals and provides easy access to instructional resources and student performance information. In addition, Aldine regularly monitors progress toward goals, ensures that staff and resources are focused on district-wide priorities, gives principals budget autonomy yet holds them accountable and aggressively recruits high-quality teachers.

Each year, **100 of the largest urban school districts nationwide are automatically eligible** 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 Aldine stand out among large urban American districts, as well as details on all the finalists, please visit www.broadprize.org.

This marks the third time in just eight years since The Broad Prize was started in 2002 that a Texas district has taken home the top honor. The Houston Independent School District won The Broad Prize in 2002, and the Brownsville Independent School District took home the award last year. Previous winners also include the New York City Department of Education (2007), Boston Public Schools (2006), Norfolk Public Schools, Va. (2005), the Garden Grove Unified School District, Calif. (2004) and the Long Beach Unified School District, Calif. (2003).

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

- **Henry Cisneros**, chairman and CEO of CityView America, former president of Univision and former U.S. secretary of housing and urban development
- **James B. Hunt, Jr.**, chairman of the board of the Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy and former governor of North Carolina
- **Shirley Ann Jackson**, president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and former chair of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- **Roderick Paige**, chairman and founder of Chartwell Education Group and former U.S. secretary of education
- **Richard W. Riley**, former U.S. secretary of education and former governor of South Carolina
- **Donna Shalala**, president of the University of Miami and former U.S. secretary of health and human services
- **Margaret Spellings**, vice president of the National Chamber Foundation and former U.S. secretary of education
- **Andrew L. Stern**, international president 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 five finalist districts' policies and practices, based on site visits, interviews with administrators, teachers, principals, parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives and classroom observations. The site visits were conducted by a team of education practitioners led by **SchoolWorks**, an education consulting company based in Beverly, Mass.

Aldine was originally selected as a finalist by a **review board** of 20 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 Aldine won this year's Broad Prize, its high school seniors who graduate in 2010 will be eligible for \$1 million 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 receive up to \$5,000 scholarships paid out over two years (\$2,500 per year). For more information, please visit www.broadprize.org/scholarship_program.

The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation is a national venture philanthropy established by entrepreneur and philanthropist Eli Broad to advance entrepreneurship for the public good in education, science and the arts. The Broad Foundation's education work is focused on dramatically improving urban K-12 public education through better governance, management, labor relations and competition. The Broad Foundation's Internet address is www.broadfoundation.org.

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