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PLANT CITY HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN WINS TONY JANNUS ESSAY CONTEST

--Statewide Essay Contest Won by a "Newbie"--

TAMPA, Fla. (October 29, 2010) – Amongst dozens of entries, one particular essay from a Plant City High School freshman took the annual writing competition to an unprecedented level. The Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society has selected James Orso as the winner of this year's Tony Jannus Essay Contest.

Mr. Orso is the first freshman ever to win this contest, a feat usually accomplished by a seasoned senior. His winning essay, "From Enduring Legacy to Driving Force," examines the history of commercial aviation and recognizes the regulations set by the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line, many of which are still in use today. Orso, and his counselor Sherrie Mueller, will be recognized on October 29th, during the forty-seventh annual Tony Jannus Award press conference at the St. Petersburg Museum of History and luncheon at the Tampa Airport Marriott.

The Tony Jannus Essay Contest is open to all Florida students in grades 9-12. The guidelines for the essay contest specify that the essay is to be 1000-1500 words and include the history of commercial aviation in the U.S. with emphasis on a previous Tony Jannus Award winner, discuss Florida's role in the development of commercial aviation and address the creation of jobs directly and indirectly through the growth of commercial aviation.

The Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society was established in 1964 by the Tampa and St. Petersburg Chambers of Commerce in honor of Tony Jannus, the pilot recognized by the Smithsonian as the founder of the world's first scheduled airline. The airline - which began flights on New Year's Day, 1914 - had only one plane, a single-engine Benoist flying boat that flew round trips daily between Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida. The Society recognizes "outstanding contributors to the growth and improvement of the scheduled airline industry" and supports outstanding students and educators through the annual Tony Jannus Award, luncheon and banquet.

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