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GOVERNOR BUSH APPLAUDS GUBERNATORIAL FELLOW SELECTED BY
USA TODAY TO THE 2006 ALL-USA COLLEGE ACADEMIC FIRST TEAM

TALLAHASSEE- Governor Jeb Bush today applauded Darius Graham, a member of the Gubernatorial Fellows Program, for being named by USA Today to the 2006 All-USA College Academic First Team. Graham was selected from more than 600 nominees in the 17th annual undergraduate recognition program. Forty nationwide runners-up were named to second and third teams.

"I am proud of Darius' outstanding achievement. His hard work and commitment to academic excellence and community service embodies the promise of Florida's future," said Governor Bush. "His leadership will make a lasting impression on the lives of the children he serves."

Graham, 21, of Charlotte, North Carolina, is a graduating senior at Florida A&M University (FAMU). He was selected along with 13 Florida students to serve as a member of the 2005-2006 Gubernatorial Fellows program. Graham works with the Department of Children and Families to develop and implement statewide policy initiatives. In 2005, Graham founded "Books All Around" which provides books for low-income children and creates libraries in local community centers. He is also the founding president of the Honor Student Association's Food for Thought luncheon forums, captain of FAMU's mock trial team, a member of the Community Improvement Advisory Council of Tallahassee and student coordinator of the city's "Day of Dialogue" race relations summit.

"I am honored to represent the students of Florida A&M University and the outstanding students across Florida as both a Fellow and a member of this prestigious academic team," said Graham. "I have always believed that reading is fundamental to a child's development, and it is never too

early to instill a love for reading. It is my hope that through these designations, I will be able to inspire other students to become involved in the life of a child."

The All-USA College Academic Team honors full-time undergraduate students who excel in scholarship and engage in activities to benefit their communities. Selections were based on the student's essay describing his or her most outstanding intellectual endeavor while in college, grade point average, academic rigor, leadership and extra curricular activities. Winners receive a trophy and a \$2,500 cash award.

"Just Read, Florida! is so proud to support the great work that Darius and his organization are doing," said Just Read, Florida! Director Mary Laura Openshaw. "Access to books is vital to our efforts to create life-long readers, and Darius's work plays a large role in helping to achieve the Governor's goal that all children will be reading at grade level or higher by 2012."

Other Florida students recognized by USA Today include Sohang Gandhi of the University of Central Florida, third team and James Bryson Voirin of New College of Florida, third team. For more information on the USA Today All-USA College Academic First Team visit www.usatoday.com/news/education/2006-02-14-college-allstars-first-team_x.htm. For more information on the Gubernatorial Fellows program visit www.myflorida.com.

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