

For Immediate Release

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### **Celorio Awards Thomas Willey Scholarships**

NASHVILLE, TN—Alicia Celorio, president of the *Do Unto Others Trust*, awarded three \$4,000 scholarships in memory of pioneer missionaries Thomas and Mabel Willey during Awards Chapel at Free Will Baptist Bible College on May 7. The scholarships were awarded to three students: Jonathan Ballard, a freshman Pastoral Ministry major from Pryor, Oklahoma; Lacey Price, a sophomore Teacher Education major from Wheelersburg, Ohio; and Kevin Hulguin, a junior Teacher Education major from Norfolk, Virginia.

This year the college received several generous gifts from the *Do Unto Others Trust*, according to President Matt Pinson. The Trust was started in 1996 by the late Justino (Tino) Celorio and his wife, Alicia, who now serves as administrator.

Pinson said, “The *Do Unto Others Trust* is an important part of FWBBC’s scholarship program. Since 2005 the Trust has provided more than \$40,000 in scholarships for our students, in addition to other gifts to the college’s general fund and relocation campaign. The generosity of Tino and Alicia Celorio has made it possible for a number of students to complete their degrees at FWBBC.”

The Celorios had been married almost 35 years when he died August 14, 2008. “Tino was a man of integrity and honesty,” Alicia said. “He practiced compassion and loyalty, and was an accomplished handyman, but he never wanted to call attention to himself. He was so down-to-earth with an amazing common sense. He was one of those rare individuals with the

vision to see 10 years down the road. He was successful in business because his goal was not to make money, but to do a job well and leave a legacy.”

Justino Celorio came to the United States from Cuba in the late 1950s, working as a painting contractor in Miami, Florida. He later became a licensed realtor and began purchasing property and renovating apartment houses. He opened a hardware and lumber business, hiring Cuban Christians who had fled Castro's regime to work in his various outreaches.

When he was 14 years old, Tino, his widowed mother, and his three sisters traveled to the Cedars of Lebanon Bible Institute in Cuba and told Free Will Baptist missionaries Thomas (Pop) and Mabel (Mom) Willey they wanted to attend the school. The girls lived in the homes of church families; one sister (Nina, later an FWBBC graduate) lived with the Willeys; Tino lived in the dormitory.

Tom Willey, Jr., said, “Tino was like a brother to me as we grew up together in Cuba. He showed a lot of early promise and had a sharp business mind. He always wanted to give back and help others as a way of showing thanks for what he had received.”

After their marriage in 1974, both Alicia and Tino Celorio worked long hours in the family business and tithed their income. Although the business prospered, they paid themselves modest salaries and later invested their funds in the *Do Unto Others Trust*.

Pastor Jose Rodriguez (Ebenezer Free Will Baptist Church, Miami) said, “We could always depend on Tino to help the church financially. Whenever a need arose, he would be there ready to assist. His mother also came to America and was a faithful member for many years until her death.”