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Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership Names 2011 Volunteers of the Year

(LOS ANGELES – September 20, 2011) — Three outstanding individuals, who combined donated nearly 1,500 volunteer hours to Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership over the past year, have been named the organization’s 2011 Volunteers of the Year. HOBY is the nation’s foremost nonprofit youth leadership development organization.

Aaron Bernstein, Lud Bezemek, Holly Marks were honored at the organization’s Training Institute in Houston for their combined 50 years of volunteer service to HOBY. All were praised for their years of service to HOBY and for other community involvement they have displayed as well as for instilling “spirit, enthusiasm and concerns for others” that HOBY President Javier LaFianza called “embedded in the HOBY culture.”

Bernstein participated as a student in the HOBY programs in 1996 and since that time has been volunteering for the organization in his home state of Maryland. There he has worked tirelessly to build student and volunteer involvement and to increase the financial reserves necessary for the organization to continue to flourish. A special education science teacher, Bernstein has served as HOBY’s Maryland leadership seminar chair and was instrumental in HOBY securing the \$25,000 Chase Community Giving Grant earlier this year.

Bezemek has been a HOBY volunteer for more than 20 years, and has excelled in fundraising for the seminars each of those years while also beginning an alumni association for HOBY’s far-west division in Texas. The owner of L & M Bezemek Realty in El Paso, Bezemek has served as HOBY’s Texas far-west corporate board president and is known for constantly encouraging and helping HOBY alumni with scholarships and college preparation.

Marks is a 1990 HOBY alumni who as an adult volunteer has worked hard to grow her site in Indiana, having met the recruitment goals for five years running and having served as a leadership seminar chair. A registered client service associate at Raymond James & Associates

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Inc. in Greenwood, Marks is well known within her community for not only donating her time to HOBY but also for supporting a host of other worthwhile organizations including the University of Evansville, the American Cancer Society, the Indy 500 Festival and the Indy Irish Fest.

“HOBY was founded on the ideals of community service and volunteerism, so we are honored to have people like Aaron, Lud and Holly continue their dedication to our organization and our mission,” said LaFianza. “The commitment and passion they and other HOBY volunteers show every day is making a positive impact on the youth of America, and for that we are all extremely grateful.”

For more than 50 years, Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership has helped to cultivate tomorrow’s leaders by inspiring a global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service and innovation. HOBY programs annually provide nearly 10,000 local and international high school students the opportunity to participate in unique leadership training, service learning and motivation-building experiences. HOBY also provides adults the opportunity to make a significant impact on the lives of youth by volunteering, and today more than 4,000 volunteers and over 365,000 alumni proudly make up the HOBY family. Further information on HOBY or the World Leadership Conference may be obtained at www.hoby.org.

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