Chestnut Hill, MA (March 15, 2005) – The Archbishop Oscar A. Romero Scholarship Committee is honored to announce Alex Sanchez ’90 as the recipient of the 2005 Father John A. Dinneen, S.J. Hispanic Alumni Community Service Award.

Alex Sanchez was born and raised in Greater Cleveland. Alex graduated from Rocky River High School and earned a Bachelors degree from Boston College in 1990, followed by a law degree from the University of Michigan. Returning to Cleveland after law school, Alex became an associate attorney with Thompson Hine LLP, working for two years in the commercial banking and bankruptcy practice area of the firm.

In a difficult decision to leave the practice of law, Alex enrolled in graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania. Immediately upon earning a Masters Degree in Administration, Alex returned to Cleveland and became the Executive Director of Esperanza, Inc., Ohio’s Hispanic scholarship and education non-profit organization. His leadership and consistent management led Esperanza to a position as one of the most well-known and well-respected non-profits in Ohio. During Alex’s tenure with Esperanza, their signature event, the annual Fiesta of Hope Scholarship Awards Luncheon, became the largest and most successful Hispanic fundraiser ever held in the state of Ohio, both in terms of attendance and financial success. In 1998 Alex led the development of new, innovative programming for elementary school students, developing the budget, securing the funding and hiring the coordinator to implement the program. In 1998-1999, the United Way selected just two area non-profits to join them as United Way Partner Agencies, and Esperanza was one of them. In Alex’s final year with Esperanza, the organization provided more educational support services, tutored more students, funded more scholarship opportunities and facilitated more collegiate cooperation than at any other time in Esperanza’s history. When Alex left Esperanza, the Hispanic Scholarship Trust Fund was funded at its highest level ever, holding over 3,000% of the endowment it held just three years earlier in 1996.
In 1999 Alex was selected to take over as the Executive Director of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) and its non-profit sister organization, the Hispanic National Bar Foundation (HNBF). As the Executive Director of the HNBA and HNBF, Alex provided the leadership, vision and enthusiasm that created explosive growth in their membership, support and public image. Alex expanded the membership benefits program, embarked upon an ambitious public relations campaign, and implemented new membership database software. HNBA membership rose 30% in 1999 alone, and in 2000 the HNBA entered into the most valuable corporate partnership in its history. Also in 2000 the HNBA was able to secure meetings with President Clinton and key United States Senators to assist in the confirmation of Hispanic judges hoping to ascend to the federal bench. Most significantly, the HNBA was successful in working to confirm Judge Richard Paez to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals – a nomination that had languished in Congress for more than four years.

Currently Alex serves as the President and CEO of United Neighborhood Centers of America, Inc., the national, non-profit umbrella organization representing approximately 800 facilities managed by 200 centers in 22 states with combined annual budgets well in excess of one billion dollars. UNCA’s mission is to strengthen and empower member organizations; to foster neighborhood pride, local decision-making and better social conditions; to help individuals and families lift themselves out of desperate social conditions in some of America’s most threatened neighborhoods.

Alex is currently a Board Member of Center for Community Solutions, the Diabetes Association of Greater Cleveland, and the International Services Center. He has previously served as a Director for the American Red Cross of Greater Cleveland, The Center for Families and Children, Neighborhood Centers Association, Recovery Resources, and the Neighborhood Housing Services of Cleveland. Alex has served in both Cleveland and Washington, D.C. as a pro bono mediator for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In 1997, Alex was elected Treasurer of the Ohio Hispanic Bar Association and also became one of the youngest individuals ever admitted into The Greater Cleveland Growth Association’s Leadership Cleveland. In early 2000 Alex was selected to serve on the five person Board of Lawyers for One America, a task force convened by President Clinton to improve opportunities for minorities in the legal profession, and was recently appointed by the American Bar Association to their Advisory Committee to the Standing Committee on Substance Abuse, and the American Red Cross’ National Diversity Committee.

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