

Latino police officers salute local students

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The Coachella Valley Chapter of the Latino Peace Officer's Association honored a group of outstanding La Quinta High School students during the association's third annual Youth Scholarship Awards Breakfast on April 25 at Heritage Palms Country Club in Indio.

La Quinta High seniors Karla Flores, Luz M. Martinez and Brian Araujo were awarded \$1,000 scholarships. All three are members of the Riverside County Sheriff's Explorer program. The students, who work out of the Indio sheriff's office, have volunteered many hours to the community, said Indio Police Chief Brad Ramos during the awards presentation.

"They're role models in our community," Ramos said. "They've distinguished themselves among their peers."

Karla will attend California State University, Long Beach, where she plans to major in



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La Quinta High School scholarship recipients (from left) **Luz Martinez**, **Brian Araujo** and **Karla Flores** were honored by the Coachella Valley Latino Peace Officers Association during the group's Student Scholarships Awards Breakfast on April 25 at Heritage Palms Country Club in Indio. Flanking the students are Indio Police Chief **Brad Ramos** (far left) and Assemblywoman **Bonnie Garcia** (far right). In the back row on the right is Palm Springs Police Chief **David Dominguez**.

criminal justice. She wants to work as an officer on a gang task force, she said.

Brian is heading to the College of the Desert in the fall and plans to transfer to the University of California, Irvine, or Cal-

ifornia State University, Long Beach. He'll pursue a degree in administrative justice. He plans to become a member of the Coachella Valley Gang Task Force.

Luz will attend Guilford Col-

lege in North Carolina. She plans to major in criminal justice.

"They're very focused on their goal of going into law enforcement," said Carol Ramirez, a counselor at La Quinta High. "We're really proud of them."

Senior Alejandra Ornelas, Air Force Jr. ROTC cadet group commander, was awarded a certificate of commendation for her "superior leadership skills."

Also recognized were cadets Nathaniel Stringer and Nicholas Carra. The seniors will enlist for active duty in the U.S. Army following graduation.

Two freshmen Air Force Jr. ROTC cadets — Christopher Robinson and Jeffery Bouma — were also awarded certificates of commendation for their exemplary performance as first-year participants in the program.

Assemblywoman Bonnie Garcia, R-Cathedral City, and Sherri Van Dorn, district director for State Sen. Jim Battin, R-La Quinta, presented recognition certificates to the honorees.