

**Ponce De Leon Middle School wins Fairchild Challenge Bronze Award for Middle Schools 2009-2010**



**From Left to Right: Mr. Eugenio Machado (Science Department Chair), Charles Damon (6<sup>th</sup> Grade), Thalia Herrera (8<sup>th</sup> Grade), Jessica Icaay (7<sup>th</sup> Grade), Ms. Deepali Verma (Fairchild Challenge coordinator for Ponce & Science Educator), Samantha Carmenate (7<sup>th</sup> grade), Payton Alley (7<sup>th</sup> Grade), Frances Matos (6<sup>th</sup> Grade), Sara Teresa Pelaez (6<sup>th</sup> Grade), Mr. Christopher Marsh (Science Educator)**

In the Seventh Annual Fairchild Challenge Awards Ceremony for Grades 6 to 8, on Monday, May 17, 2010, Ponce De Leon Middle school Students won the Fairchild Challenge Bronze Award. This award is accompanied with a 250\$ check which will be used by the students to put scientific name labels on the plants at Ponce. Currently Ponce has a Miami Tropical Garden, a Xerophytes Garden, a Water Garden, and Organic Food garden, Herb, Butterfly and Peace Garden. Ponce does water conservation using rain barrels; and cafeteria garbage composting as well. Students at Ponce recycle paper which then brings in more funds for the school supplies. All these year around efforts are made by the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science students in Mr. Machado, Ms. Verma, and Mr. Marsh's classes.

Among the various awards won by the students are the Honorable mentions for Botanical Fashion Show for Male, Female costume and Couples Ensemble. Charles Damon won the Honorable Mention for Interpretive Sign: Research poster on Invasive Species, Thalia Herrera won the Honorable Mention for Baynanza T-shirt Design, Jessica Icaay, Payton Alley, and Samantha Carmenate won the Outstanding Performance for Environmental Actions Reports. Jessica Icaay also won the Environmental Role Model Student for the Year and Mr. Marsh won the Environmental Role Model Teacher for the year.