
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

November 28, 2003
For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Larry Perosino
860/509-6259

DEMOCRACY CUP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Towns post top Election Day voter turnout in state

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced that **West Hartford, Naugatuck** and **Washington** have won the 2003 Democracy Cup Challenge by posting the best turnout of voters on Election Day among Connecticut's towns. Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association (EHCA), the Democracy Cup Challenge was established in 2000 as a way to encourage and recognize voter participation.

"With voter turnout in Connecticut annually one of the best among all states, our Democracy Cup winners stand as a national example," Bysiewicz said. "Voting is the foundation of our democracy and everyone who went to the polls on Election Day is helping to preserve the freedoms we enjoy in this country."

Municipal elections were held this year, and **West Hartford's** 47.9% voter turnout was best among large towns. **Naugatuck**, one of six towns that hold May elections, led all mid-size municipalities at 51.4%. **Washington** took the small town and overall category at 66.1%. Statewide turnout totaled 41.7% for all 2003 local elections.

"It is remarkable how the winning towns are able to turn out so many voters," said EHCA President Scot Mackinnon. "We have learned that the winning towns generally have an aggressive network of volunteers who make sure that citizens of all ages are aware of the privilege and responsibility that goes with the right to vote."

West Hartford became the first three-time winner with top large town turnouts in the 2000 presidential, 2002 state and 2003 local elections. **Waterbury** was the large town Democracy Cup winner with a 50.3% in the 2001 municipal elections. **Washington** has now won two consecutive small town and overall municipal titles.

Under the Democracy Cup Challenge criteria, towns with less than 15,000 registered voters are considered small, mid-size municipalities have between 15-35,000 voters and large towns over 35,000. **Bridgeport** (38.9%) was the 2002 large town runner-up with **Danbury** (50.7%) placing second among mid-size towns and **Middlefield** (65.7%) second best in the small town field. 2002 Democracy Cup winners were respectively **West Hartford, Glastonbury** and **Middlebury**.

Each winning town will be able to host and display a Democracy Cup trophy through next year's November elections. Trophy presentation ceremonies are currently being scheduled for early 2004.