
From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz

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CONTACT: Dan Tapper, 509-6259
324-9862 (Cell)

**SECRETARY OF THE STATE BYSIEWICZ ANNOUNCES
WINNERS OF 2006 "DEMOCRACY CUP"**

Union, Westport, West Hartford win award for highest voter turnout for small, medium, and large-sized towns

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced today that Union, Westport, and West Hartford are the winners of the 2006 "Democracy Challenge Cup" for small, medium, and large-sized towns, respectively. The award is given annually to the small, medium, and large-sized towns with the best voter turnout on Election Day.

Union, a first-time winner, won with a voter turnout of 78.8 percent, Westport won for the second time with a turnout of 72.7 percent, and West Hartford won for the fifth time with a turnout of 69.4 percent.

"I congratulate these three towns for doing the best job this year of getting voters out to the polls. All three showed extremely high voter turnout for a mid-year election, far exceeding our statewide voter turnout. Considering that, this year, we had our highest statewide turnout for a mid-term election since 1994, it is quite an accomplishment for these three towns to have had so many citizens go the polls this year," Secretary Bysiewicz said. "We had a very interesting mix of winners this year. Union, the state's smallest town, is a first-time winner, while Westport won the award for medium-sized towns for the second time. Meanwhile, West Hartford continued its great Election Day work every year with its fifth victory among large-sized towns in seven years."

"This all adds up to November 7th being a great day for Democracy in Connecticut," Secretary Bysiewicz said. "There is no civil right we possess that is more precious than our right to vote, and these three towns did a wonderful job this year of leading the way for Connecticut. I congratulate the citizens of Union, Westport, and West Hartford for their great work this year."

Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association in 2000, the Democracy Cup was created as a way to encourage voter participation in each year's elections. Under Democracy

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Cup criteria established by Secretary Bysiewicz, towns with fewer than 15,000 registered voters are considered small, municipalities with between 15,000 and 30,000 voters are considered mid-sized, and cities and towns with more than 30,000 registered voters are considered large. **(SEE ATTACHED CHART FOR PAST WINNERS)**

“Well, it appears that Connecticut's voters have proven the democracy doomsayers wrong. Connecticut's electorate was engaged right from the beginning of primary season this year,” Scot Mackinnon, the co-founder of the Democracy Cup whose East Haddam Civic Association sponsors the Democracy Challenge Cup for best voter turnout each year, said. Mackinnon noted, “The turnout was amazing. Voters were certainly motivated to follow the issues this year. Campaign rallies had more of an old-fashioned feel to them this cycle, especially in the United States Senate race with plenty of stump speeches and voter-to-candidate contact.”

Thomas Fitzgerald, First Selectman of Union, said, “Winning the award is wonderful. We’re a very close-knit town up here; everybody knows everybody. We all get together on Election Day and always produce a good turnout. There is a lot of community pride up here - people want to have a voice and they want to have a say.”

Westport First Selectman Gordon Joseloff said, “We are delighted to win this award again – it’s a reflection of the interest and the involvement of Westporters in local, state, and national politics. This is a very savvy, issues-aware community, and getting the people out to the polls is a demonstration of that.”

West Hartford Mayor Scott Slifka said, “We are very proud of the residents of West Hartford for once again demonstrating their commitment to the civic process. One of the best ways to measure the strength of a community is by the involvement of citizens in the Democratic process. In this regard, I am proud that West Hartford has few peers.”

A formal awards ceremony and presentation of the “Democracy Challenge Cup” trophy will be held in each of the three towns in early December, Secretary Bysiewicz said.

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Democracy Cup Winners 2000-2006

YEAR	SMALL TOWNS	MIDSIZE TOWNS	LARGE TOWNS
2000	Essex	Westport	West Hartford
2001	Washington	Trumbull	Waterbury
2002	Middlebury	Glastonbury	West Hartford
2003	Washington	Naugatuck	West Hartford
2004	Washington	Wethersfield	Fairfield
2005	Middlebury	Shelton	West Hartford
2006	Union	Westport	West Hartford