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**STUDENT AUTHORS FROM MIDDLESEX COUNTY HONORED FOR THEIR
WRITING SKILLS: CELEBRATE NJ! HOSTS AWARDS NIGHT**

(Bradley Beach, NJ) -- Spirits were soaring as 60 student authors from Middlesex County, whose articles were selected for publication by Celebrate NJ!, were honored at a special award ceremony at Brunswick Square Mall, East Brunswick on Tuesday (May 22, 2007).

(Editor's Note: See school list at end of release)

All of the students participated in an interactive online program designed to make the required study of New Jersey a fun and engaging project. The challenge was to help create a newspaper written by and for New Jersey kids about New Jersey, researching subject areas from arts to science to sports and everything in between.

Karen Hatcher, Executive Director of Celebrate NJ! says, "I was impressed with how poised these students were when summarizing their projects. They chose some very challenging topics, from the environmental impact of the Meadowlands to a New Jersey historical timeline to the Statue of Liberty. By making connections to New Jersey's people, places, businesses, events and history, we hope these students are inspired and feel proud to call New Jersey home. The awards event gives the rest of us the opportunity to be inspired by them—New Jersey's future."

Brittany Crawford and Destiny Heasman, 4th graders from Matthew Jago School in Woodbridge, initially thought the project would be difficult. Destiny admitted, "I thought it would be hard at first, but then I went on the (Celebrate NJ!) web site and found all the information I needed and it made it easier. This was fun and interesting to study."

Linda Goetz, a 4th grade teacher from Sacred Heart School in South Plainfield, added, "This program is great for getting kids really interested in studying New Jersey. Now, when things come on the news, the kids will know more about the state. It helps them appreciate where they live."

South River Mayor, Robert Szegeti, Monroe Township Councilwoman Leslie Koppel-Egierd and the Somerset Patriots' mascot, Sparkee, were on hand to congratulate the children.

Each student who participated in the program, whether selected for an award or not, has also been invited to take part in one of eight Celebrate NJ! nights which will be held at minor league baseball parks across the state. Students from Middlesex County will attend the Somerset Patriots game on Monday, June 4th or the Lakewood BlueClaws game on May 31st.

Students from the following schools were honored at the event: Appleby School, Spotswood; Brookside Elementary School, Monroe Township; St. Bartholomew School, East Brunswick; Chittick School, East Brunswick; St. Frances Cabrini School, Piscataway; Franklin Elementary School, South Plainfield; Matthew Jago School, Woodbridge; Sacred Heart School, South Plainfield; South River Elementary School, South River; and St. Joseph School, Carteret.

To read the student's online newspaper and learn more about the Celebrate NJ! school program, go to www.CelebrateNJ.org.

-30-

Photo Caption: Back Row from L-R: Karen Hatcher, Executive Director of Celebrate NJ! and Linda Goetz, of Sacred Heart School in South Plainfield. Front Row L-R: Justin Durham and Italo Cardoso, students at Sacred Heart School.