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INSTILLING STATE PRIDE IN STUDENTS:
58 STUDENT AUTHORS FROM MONMOUTH COUNTY HONORED BY
CELEBRATE NJ!

(Bradley Beach, NJ) -- For fifty-eight fourth grade student authors from Monmouth County, whose work was honored Tuesday night, learning about the state they call home was exciting and fun.

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

Thanks to the Celebrate NJ! School Program, students and teachers were able to bring research information to life through an interactive online program designed to make the required study of New Jersey fun and engaging for fourth graders. Over 9,000 students across New Jersey were guided to research and write articles about state history, people places and events in a wide range of areas including arts, science, business, sports and everything in between. The challenge was to help create a newspaper written by and for New Jersey kids about New Jersey. These students were part of the 300 "Best of the Best" selected for publication in the organization's online newspaper.

Debbie Wagner, a 4th grade teacher from Nutswamp Elementary School in Middletown, says, "The children needed to see the positive aspects of New Jersey, and this program was a great jumping off point." Wagner's students worked in teams to create a series of 3-fold, double-sided informational brochures. Their efforts are also being honored by the Middletown Board of Education.

The Monmouth County winners were honored at a special award ceremony at the Monmouth Mall in Eatontown on Tuesday, May 15th. Buster, the Lakewood BlueClaws team mascot, was there to help in the celebration. 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 Monmouth County will attend the Lakewood BlueClaws game on May 31, 2007.

Karen Hatcher, Executive Director of Celebrate NJ! says, "These students impressed us with the subjects they chose and their enthusiasm for learning about our great state. By

making connections to the important people, places and events that have shaped New Jersey from the time of the American Revolution into current day, we hope these students are inspired and feel proud to call New Jersey home. The awards event will give the rest of us the opportunity to be inspired by them—New Jersey’s future.”

The ‘Best of the Best’ fourth grade articles were chosen as part of the Second Annual School Program put on by Celebrate NJ!, a non-profit organization whose mission is to build pride and forward a bright future for New Jersey.

Monmouth County students honored represented the following schools: Aldrich Elementary, Howell; Asher Holmes Elementary, Morganville; Cove Road School, Hazlet; Farmingdale Elementary, Farmingdale; Land O’ Pines Elementary, Howell; Nutswamp Elementary, Middletown; Southard School, Howell; St. Veronica’s School, Howell; Wanamassa Elementary, Ocean.

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

-30-

Photo Caption: Karen Hatcher, President of Celebrate NJ! listens while students from the Cove Road Elementary School in Hazlet summarize what they learned from their school projects about their home state. The children were honored at a recent awards ceremony at Monmouth Mall in Eatontown.