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INSTILLING STATE PRIDE IN STUDENTS:
STUDENT AUTHORS FROM ESSEX, MORRIS, UNION, AND SUSSEX
COUNTIES HONORED BY CELEBRATE NJ!

(Livingston, NJ) -- For dozens of fourth graders from Essex, Morris, Union and Sussex Counties who participated in this year's Celebrate NJ! School Program, it was a chance to discover new facts about the place they call home.

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

New Jersey students participated in an interactive online program in their classes, which resulted in their writing newspaper articles on a variety of topics ranging from famous New Jersey athletes and historic figures, to scientific inventions and NJ based businesses. Students were encouraged to find little known facts about their topics to make their articles interesting and fun to read.

Karon Newman, a fourth-grade teacher at the Jefferson Elementary School in Maplewood, said "This was a great way for students to connect skills and concepts to the real world. Parents, grandparents, friends, and teachers beamed with pride as students spoke into the microphone to tell of their discoveries about New Jersey. This has been a great project from start to finish!"

The children received awards at a ceremony held Monday (May 7, 2007) at the Livingston Mall in Livingston. Rupert, the Newark Bears Mascot, was on hand to congratulate the students. This was the second of several programs for 2007 that will be held across the state to pay tribute to the program and participants. All of the honored youngsters have been invited to a special Celebrate NJ! Game Night with the Newark Bears at Riverfront Stadium on June 29, 2007.

Karen Hatcher, Executive Director of Celebrate NJ! explains, "The program helps our children make an important connection to the place they call home. When we feel good about where we come from, we feel good about ourselves. We say that the program is about education, inspiration and celebration. These kids really inspired us tonight!"

Fourth grade students in NJ are required to study state history in their Social Studies classes. More than 9,000 students throughout New Jersey participated in the program and were engaged in a learning process that took them into many subjects as they researched and wrote about what makes New Jersey so unique.

The award recipients are from the following schools: St. Bartholomew Interparochial in Scotch Plains; Sts. Mary & Elizabeth Academy in Linden; Leonard V. Moore School in Roselle; Jefferson Elementary School in Summit; Millington School in Millington, St. Therese School in Succasunna, Gregory School in West Orange; St. Genevieve School in Elizabeth and Benedict A. Cucinella School in Long Valley.

Celebrate NJ!, is a grassroots organization whose mission is to build pride and foster a bright future for the Garden State through educational programs and promotional campaigns. For full details and information on events, visit www.CelebrateNJ.org.

Photo caption: L to r: Daniel Lopez, Joey Panterdolph, Maria Patricia Livingstone, and Aileen Conroy, St. Bartholomew's Elementary School, Scotch Plains.