

# PRESS RELEASE

League of Women Voters of South Kingstown and Narragansett  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **Teachers from N. Kingstown, S. Kingstown & Providence will be honored at Civic Education Merit Award Reception at the State House**

On Monday, June 9, 2008 @ 4:00pm, in the Governor's Reception Room at the Rhode Island State House, David Avedisian, a North Kingstown High School history/current issues teacher; Jim Buxton, a South Kingstown High School social studies teacher; and Henry Marciano, Social Studies Department Head at Esek Hopkins Middle School will be recognized for their work in civic education as recipients of the inaugural Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Award for 2007 - 08. Mr. Avedisian will receive the Grand Prize, Mr. Buxton will receive the Jury Prize, and Mr. Marciano will receive an Honorable Mention Award. The Grand Prize and Jury Prize include a cash award of \$800 and \$500, respectively.

David Avedisian was recognized for the guidance he gave his students at North Kingstown High School as they worked to address the North Kingstown School Department's budget deficit. Mary Gardiner, the Social Studies Department Chairperson at the high school, wrote in the application, "The latest budget project has given the students more political influence and commendations in the school district than in any prior year. In the middle of March of 2008, the students invited various members from the School

Committee and Town Council to the classroom for a budget session. It was the first time that a student led meeting....between these two sides was held in a classroom.”

In 1979, Jim Buxton started the South Kingstown High School Model United Nations Program. Mr. Buxton explained on his application that this program is based on the organizational structure of the United Nations. “For example, a student in 1990 might have represented China on the Security Council, debating what to do about Iraq's invasion of Kuwait...the student would have to research the country they are representing, the topic at hand and the workings of the UN Security Council.” Also Mr. Buxton mentions a “contagion effect” the program has outside of the school. Students from high-schools all over Rhode Island have attended the South Kingstown model UN program and Mr. Buxton helped The Prout School start its own UN program.

For over 30 years, Henry Marciano has been a social studies teacher in the Providence school system. About his most recent teaching endeavor, he wrote in his application that it is “preparing 160 students to conduct a political campaign and election for mayor and judge of Exchange City. . . [the] goal is to prepare students to learn how to govern and run businesses in a mock style city.” Mr. Marciano also wrote, “I believe it is far more important to promote civic virtue among our young people to take an active role in improving their communities, and ultimately our nation.”

The League of Women Voters of South Kingstown/Narragansett inaugurated the Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Award with funding from the League of Women Voters Rhode Island Education Fund. The Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Award was created to honor two individual high school teachers or teams of teachers, who have enriched their students' understanding of civic rights and responsibilities; have encouraged their students' civic participation; have brought context and relevance to

crucial events affecting governments within the United States; or have promoted understanding and appreciation of individuals who have played pivotal roles in such events.

Further information about the application process and other details about this award as well as a brief biography of Susan B. Wilson, founding member of the League of Women Voters of South Kingstown/Narragansett, is available on The League of Women Voters Rhode Island website:

[www.lwvri.org](http://www.lwvri.org). Questions may also be directed to [sknarr@lwvri.org](mailto:sknarr@lwvri.org). Please include a phone number in your email.

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AWARD RECIPIENTS:**

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