

PRESS RELEASE

League of Women Voters of South Kingstown and Narragansett
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Teachers from North Kingstown, South Kingstown & Foster/Glocester will be honored at Civic Education Merit Award Reception at the State House

The RI League of Women Voters is pleased to announce this year's recipients of the Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Award. The League inaugurated this annual award to honor teachers who have enriched their students' understanding of civic rights and responsibilities; have encouraged their students' civic participation; and have brought context and relevance to crucial events affecting governments within the United States.

The 2008 – 2009 merit award recipients are: North Kingstown High School's **Lawrence Verria**, a History/Social Studies Teacher, who received the Grand Prize of \$800; South Kingstown's Curtis Corner Middle School's **Colleen Chappell**, a social studies teacher, who received the Jury Prize of \$500; and Foster/Glocester's Ponagansett Middle School's **Michael Calenda and Jonathan Rollins**, 8th grade social studies teachers, who received the Honorable Mention Award, \$200.

Lawrence Verria was recognized for the guidance he gave his students at North Kingstown High School as they planned a candidates' forum. One judge said, "This program is a model for others. For over 20 years Mr. Verria has encouraged his students to learn, care about and

understand the importance of being involved on the grass roots level of local, state and national politics.”

Colleen Chappell was recognized for her work in teaching a greater understanding of our constitution. One judge said, “Mrs. Chappell creatively mixes everything from Venn diagrams to rap songs and poetry to make civics relevant to her students.”

Michael Calenda and Jonathan Rollins were recognized for their participation in Mock Trial and National Law Day, the National Current Events League and especially the Wreaths Across America Program. One judge said, “Part of civics is a respect for law, citizens and government. Mr. Calenda and Mr. Rollins have taught this in many different ways and have strongly influenced their students and their community.”

There were three judges for the award.

Senator Lincoln D. Chafee: Former United States Senator for Rhode Island, from November 1999 to January 2007. Currently, he is a Visiting Fellow in International Studies at the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University.

Christopher H. Little: A practicing attorney for over two decades, he specializes in construction, commercial, and environmental law at Little, Bulman, Medeiros, Kinder & Whitney, P.C., his firm in Providence. Last year, he was a candidate for the Rhode Island House of Representatives, District 33. He has served in an official capacity on a variety of non-profit and community organizations and is married to the principal of Wakefield Elementary School in South Kingstown.

Camilla Weiner: Currently, she is Regent of the Narragansett-Cooke-Gaspee Chapter of the RI Daughters of the American Revolution and a retired elementary school teacher. A forty-year member of the League

of Women Voters, she is a former President of The South Kingstown/Narragansett League chapter.

In recognition of all these achievements throughout the state of Rhode Island: There will be The Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Awards Reception on Tuesday, June 9, 2009, @ 4:00pm in the Governor's Reception Room at the Rhode Island State House. All recipients, their families and colleagues will be present as will officers and members of the League of Women Voters and various legislators. The judges will give out the awards and there will be a reception afterwards.

Further information 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AWARD RECIPIENTS:

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Michael Calenda & Jonathan Rollins
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