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Winning Students Express their Concerns, Hopes for Minnesota's Future in Video Contest Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the State

(St. Paul, Minn. – May 16, 2008) – The Citizens League announced today the winners of the “I am Minnesota’s Future Video Contest.” Nathan Huber, 13, of St. Peter, was the individual winner for his video “Stop Global Warming,” and first place in the group category went to Minneapolis North High School Polar Producers, including Shauneida Tatum, 16; Chatrina Wilkins, 16; Lue Vang, 16; Aqeel El Amin, 16; and Chris Reed, 15, for “Peace by Piece: Teens Speak Out About Violence.”

In honor of Minnesota’s sesquicentennial this year, the Citizens League has launched the Minnesota Anniversary Project (MAP 150) to look ahead to the state’s next 150 years. This contest asked young people to create short videos answering: “What kind of state do you want to live in when you’re an adult, and what do you think ought to be done to make sure that happens?” Students responded with video entries that addressed issues ranging from global warming to immigration, from peace to technology and opportunities for young people.

Contestants were asked to address what legacy they would like today’s policy makers to leave for them. All the videos can be found on the sponsoring site, www.studentsspeakout.org, as well as YouTube.

The individual winners are:

First place: Nathan Huber, 13, St. Peter Minnesota, won for “Stop Global Warming.” Nathan is homeschooled.

Second place: Kaelie Lund, 14, from Buffalo Community Middle School in Greenfield, recognized for "Technology: The Future?"

Third place: Guadalupe Ballinas, 13, Richfield, recognized for "Behind the Shadows."

The group category winners are:

First place: North High School Polar Producers, includes Shauneida Tatum, 16; Chatrina Wilkins, 16; Lue Vang, 16; Aqeel El Amin, 16; and Chris Reed, 15; all from Minneapolis. They won for "Peace by Piece: Teens Speak Out."

Second place: Steve Lewer, 18; Mark Gwen, 15; Aubri Jackson, 13; all of St. Paul, were recognized for "Youth Spaces PSA."

Third place: Gloria Ponce Negrete, 13; Yaneli Sanchez Hernandez, 13; and Marlen Sanchez, 12; all from Richfield, were recognized for "Rights for Immigrants."

"We continue to find that young people want to be engaged in issues that are important them and to their futures," said Sean Kershaw, executive director of the Citizens League. "They have thoughtful and insightful opinions on important problems. So we are excited that this project is giving students a vehicle to speak out."

First prize winners receive a digital video camera and a \$150 Best Buy gift card. Second place winners receive \$100 Best Buy gift cards, and third prize winners receive a \$75 Best Buy gift card. Students participating in Students Speak Out as well as judges from education, local media, state government and non-profits helped judge the videos, which were ranked on their persuasiveness, insightfulness, message, and how well they engaged the viewer.

About the Citizens League

The Citizens League builds civic capacity in Minnesota by:

- Identifying, framing and proposing solutions to public policy problems;
- Developing new generations of civic leaders who govern for the common good; and
- Organizing the individual and institutional relationships necessary to achieve these goals.

About MAP 150

The Citizens League launched its Minnesota Anniversary Project "MAP 150" in 2005 as

part of its contribution toward launching Minnesota's next 150 years. MAP 150's goal is to improve Minnesota's problem-solving capacity by developing tools and processes that place citizens more fully in the role of "co-producers" of the public good. It seeks to put into practice "the wisdom of crowds" in the public arena—processes virtually nonexistent in the public sector.

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