



SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT

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For more information:
Av Harris: (860) 509-6255
Cell: (860) 463-5939

- NEWS RELEASE -

SECRETARY BYSIEWICZ ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2009 DEMOCRACY CUP

STAMFORD, EAST HAVEN, ORANGE AND BRIDGEWATER TAKE HONORS FOR
TOP VOTER TURNOUT

Hartford: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced today that Bridgewater (78.9%), Orange (58.9%), East Haven (55.5%), and Stamford (41.9%) are the winners of the 2009 “Democracy Cup.” The award is given annually to the small, medium, large-sized towns and city with the highest voter turnout on Election Day.

“There were some hotly contested local races in our Municipal Elections this year, and that definitely helped increase voter turnout in some of our communities,” said Secretary Bysiewicz, Connecticut’s Chief Elections Official. “Crucial budget issues are at stake in each of our communities that affect everything from schools to roads, bridges, and property tax rates. I congratulate these three towns and the city of Stamford for doing the best job this year of getting voters out to the polls. The involvement of citizens in the democratic process is the cornerstone of our civic life and this year the voters of Bridgewater, Orange, East Haven and Stamford proved they are leaders.”

Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association since 2000, the Democracy Cup was created as a way to encourage voter participation in each year’s elections. Under Democracy Cup criteria established by Secretary Bysiewicz, towns with fewer than 5,000 registered voters are considered small; municipalities with between 5,000 and 14,999 registered voters are considered mid-sized, towns with 15,000 and 49,999 registered voters are

considered large towns. Cities with more than 50,000 registered voters are their own category.

“All Connecticut communities should be proud of their voter participation this year, but none more so than our big cities; especially Stamford,” said Scot Mackinnon, co-founder of the Democracy Cup and East Haddam Civic Association member. “While rural Bridgewater’s 78.9% was the best turnout overall, Stamford's 41.9% is a very respectable number in a municipal election year when turnout is usually lower than a Presidential election, for example. Typically, while smaller municipalities have an easier time getting voters to the polls, urban centers, like Stamford, New Haven and Hartford, are gaining ground. This is a trend worth celebrating.”

Overall, statewide voter turnout was 36.4% in the 2009 Municipal Elections, less than the 2008 statewide figure of 80.5%.

Each town awarded the Democracy Cup will be able to host and display a trophy through next year’s November elections. Trophy presentation ceremonies were held today in East Haven and Stamford. The presentation for Bridgewater was held on December 7, 2009 and the presentation in Orange is scheduled for January 6, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.

**Democracy Cup Winners
2000-2009**

YEAR	SMALL TOWN	MID-SIZE TOWN	LARGE TOWN	CITY
2009	Bridgewater	Orange	East Haven	Stamford
2008	New Hartford	Avon	Newtown	Stamford
2007	East Haven	North Haven	West Hartford	
2006	Union	Westport	West Hartford	
2005	Middlebury	Shelton	West Hartford	
2004	Washington	Wethersfield	Fairfield	
2003	Washington	Naugatuck	West Hartford	
2002	Middlebury	Glastonbury	West Hartford	
2001	Washington	Trumbull	Waterbury	
2000	Essex	Westport	West Hartford	