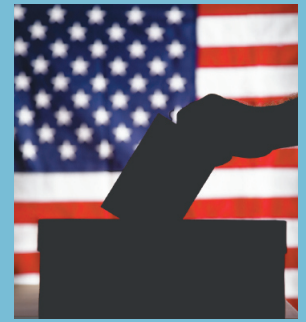


# BALLOT BOX BULLETIN

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF KIDS VOTING USA FEBRUARY 2011



## OTHER NEWS

### KV Central Ohio Celebrates 10 Years

Kids Voting Central Ohio celebrated its 10th Anniversary in December at its annual Holiday Board meeting and luncheon. The Kids Voting Board



of Directors and Staff were joined by members of the Kids Voting Honorary Board of Elected Officials, the Kids Voting



Educational Advisory Board and the Kids Voting Youth Council.

Board President Peter Hahn, who has been with Kids Voting for the entire 10 years, shared that much has changed during the last decade, but that the mission



and programs of Kids Voting remain vitally important. He congratulated the organization for a decade of achievement and challenged those in attendance to continue their commitment to civic education and participation in the future.

## The Arizona Republic Makes Donation to KV Arizona

Phoenix based newspaper *The Arizona Republic*, tv news KPHO and azcentral.com marked their debut into one location by donating to Kids Voting Arizona and Project Citizen. The agencies want to promote programs that encourage children's civic involvement in memory of a girl killed in the shootings near Tucson.

The \$10,000 donation to Project Citizen and Kids Voting was made in memory of Christina Green, the 9-year-old who was one of six people killed in a shooting rampage that critically injured U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords.

"Christina Green, who was just elected to the student council, was on her way to participating in the democratic process. These programs are a fitting tribute to her, said Gene D'Adamo, vice president of community relations for *The Republic* and azcentral.com.

On January 12th, Kids Voting staff, Becky Tigerman, received a check on air from the news corporation. The following day KPHO featured a news segment promoting civic engagement of youth, and featured Kids Voting/Project Citizen teacher, George Colebrook, his students and parent/Kids Voting staff Chris Groninger.

"When kids get out and vote, it not only creates lifelong voting habits but it helps get parents to vote too," said Chris Groninger.



## Civics Celebration Banquet

On February 17th, Kids Voting Mesa County will host its 5th Annual Civics Celebration Banquet to celebrate "Growing up with Leadership." The Mesa State College Center Ballroom will be the site of this community gala where guests will enjoy dinner, student entertainment and a program that includes a welcome from Tim Foster, President, Mesa State College and dynamic keynote speaker Corey Hafey, Principal, Taylor Elementary School.

This year's event will also include guests' judging of the student-created table decor (one school will win the coveted Peoples' Choice Table Decoration Award as guests vote with their dollars) as well as the popular Hot Dog with a Top Dog. Local leaders (a.k.a. Top Dogs) have donated themselves for lunch (the Hot Dog) with guests who have the opportunity to buy chances throughout the evening. At the end of the evening, the lucky winners' names are pulled out of a hat. Lunches are donated by local restaurants.

"This celebration is a key component to our success as we begin our fiscal drive for the new year," said Terry Porter, President of Kids Voting. "Besides having a great time, participants will help ensure the future of Kids Voting Mesa County."

## Youth Engagement is a Problem Worldwide

Written by: Dr. Diana Carlin, KVUSA Board Chairman

As I write this, violent protests are taking place in Egypt, and Tunisia and Jordan are experiencing political unrest. Our country has certainly had its share of political unrest since our founding. The recent shootings in Arizona are a reminder that there will always be individuals in society who choose not to use the peaceful means of bringing about change that the vast majority of us embrace. I am confident that many of our Kids Voting teachers are using the recent events as a catalyst for classroom discussions. As you read in the BBB, one aftermath of the Arizona tragedy was a contribution to Kids Voting Arizona in honor of Christina Taylor Green and her belief in democratic institutions.

Christina represented all that we hope to achieve with Kids Voting, and I know the contribution will provide a lasting legacy to her.

Over the past few months, KVUSA has had inquiries from education leaders in other countries about using Kids Voting as a model program in their new democracies. It is heartening to know that our program is seen by others as a way to channel civic engagement in positive ways. Rachel and the board are working on potential changes to our by-laws that would enable us to invite international affiliates into our network. I have personally had the opportunity to work with the Kansas City International Visitors Center to inform groups from the Middle East and Europe about the program. The problems we confront with youth engagement are worldwide it appears. We look forward to continuing to share our experiences with others in hopes that violence and tragedies such as those we've witnessed the past few weeks will be relegated to history.



## ★ February ★ Educator of the Month

KVUSA is pleased to announce that **Lauren Olson** is the February Educator of the Month. Ms. Olson is a teacher at Rutland ISD in Rutland, South Dakota and serves as the Secondary History Teacher. Lauren Olson was involved with Red, White and Blue Week where students created a human flag, colored patriotic pictures, registered to vote and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Additionally, she assisted students with creating a short presentation for K-6 students about the candidates on their ballot. The presentation was delivered during a K-6 grade assembly.

Kids Voting USA truly appreciates the work and passion Ms. Lauren Olson demonstrates for our program.

## Youth Question Candidates

This fall Kids Voting Minnesota hosted a debate for students from nine area schools. The event, which was held at Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls, gave the students a chance to question candidates for Minnesota Secretary of State. More than 500 students assembled for the debate between Secretary of State Candidate Mark Ritchie and Dan "Doc" Severson.

Panelists asked questions ranging from why the two were running for the office to what lessons they learned from the 2008 Norm Coleman/Al Franken recount. Candidates debated issues such as whether to require photo identification at polling places, the viability of Internet voting and how to do much more with tighter state budgets.

The Secretary of State's office oversees the administration of elections and preserves many official records in the state, among other duties.



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