

Tucson School Nationally Recognized

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TUCSON SCHOOL TAKES TOP HONOR IN PROJECT CITIZEN NATIONAL SHOWCASE

Two Lineweaver Elementary School Teams Recognized Nationally

[Phoenix, AZ] –On Friday May 2nd, 2008, over 275 students from across Arizona represented their schools and passion for public policy at the statewide Project Citizen Showcase. After a display of their portfolios, student teams gave oral presentations in support of their public policy ideas before panels of volunteer judges.

Linweaver Elementary School took top honors for their display on Solar Energy, and the fifth graders were awarded with the chance to have their display judged at the 2008 Project Citizen National Showcase in New Orleans this past July. These displays were judged by Legislators all over the country during the National Conference of State Legislators' Annual Conference. The fifth graders received a Superior Score. This is the highest ranking a school can receive in the Project Citizen National Showcase. These students were also recently asked to have their portfolio displayed at the Annual Coordinator's Conference in Washington D.C this October. This conference brings together over 500 state and district coordinators from around the country to network and discuss ways of promoting and improving the Project Citizen program throughout the United States. Heather Matchett's fifth grade students' portfolio was one of five chosen from each region in the country for the conference display later this year.

Along with the fifth graders at the Tucson Elementary school, were third graders from the same school who were given the opportunity to display their portfolio on Animal Safety at the National Showcase. Although Project Citizen is a program for 5th-9th graders around the country, the third graders from this Tucson school were given the chance to shine this year. “Even though the younger students’ portfolios were not judged, they were given an amazing opportunity to showcase their talents with 50 other schools around the country”, marveled Michelle Kenoun, who coordinates Project Citizen for the Arizona Foundation for Legal

Services & Education. “They received a Special Recognition Award for their hard work, which was truly deserved.”

About Project Citizen: Project Citizen is portfolio-based civic education project for middle grade students sponsored nationally by the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). It is supported locally by the Arizona Legislature and the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education. The program teaches young people to monitor and influence public policy. Students work cooperatively to identify a public problem in their community. They then research the problem, evaluate alternative solutions, develop their own solution in the form of a public policy, and create a political action plan to enlist local or state authorities to adopt their proposed policy. Participants develop a portfolio of their work and present their project in an oral hearing before a panel of civic-minded community volunteers.

About the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education

The Foundation provides technical and financial assistance to legal aid organizations, schools and community groups working toward “access to justice for all Arizonans” through law-related education and free legal services. The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education plays a leading role in preparing Arizona students for civic responsibility. The Foundation reaches more than 100,000 children each year by training teachers, school resource officers and probation officers about our laws, justice system and the foundations of democracy. It is also home of *LawForKids.org*, America’s first Web site dedicated to teaching students about the law.

Helpful Websites/More Information:

- Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education: <http://www.azflse.org>
- Arizona Project Citizen: <http://www.azflse.org/pcitizen>
- Arizona State Legislature: <http://www.azleg.state.az.us>
- Center for Civic Education (CCE): <http://www.civiced.org>
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL): <http://www.ncsl.org/>

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