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*From the Office of Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz*

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**SECRETARY OF THE STATE BYSIEWICZ AWARDS  
"DEMOCRACY CUP" TO THREE TOWNS**

*West Hartford, Shelton, Middlebury take honors for top voter turnout*



Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz awards the Democracy Challenge Cup to officials from Middlebury on January 9, 2006. Middlebury won the Democracy Cup in the small town category with 73.7 percent voter turnout.



Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz awards the Democracy Challenge Cup to officials from Shelton on January 10, 2006. Shelton won the Democracy Cup in the medium-sized town category with 52 percent voter turnout.



Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz awards the Democracy Challenge Cup to officials from West Hartford on January 12, 2006. West Hartford won the Democracy Cup in the large town category with 43.7 percent voter turnout.

Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz last week awarded Middlebury, Shelton, and West Hartford with the 2005 "Democracy Challenge Cup," awarded each year to the small, medium-sized, and large town with the top voter turnout on Election Day. Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association (EHCA), the Democracy Cup Challenge was established in 2000 as a way to encourage and recognize voter participation.

West Hartford took the prize for voter turnout by a large municipality with 43.7 percent of its people turning out this past Election Day, Shelton won the midsize-town category with 52 percent turnout, and Middlebury one the small-sized town category with 73.7 percent turnout, Secretary Bysiewicz said. Each town held a ceremony last week at which Secretary Bysiewicz awarded the trophy.

"Once again, our Democracy Cup winners stand as an excellent example of why Connecticut every year has among the best voter turnouts in the nation. I congratulate West Hartford, Shelton, and Middlebury for their wonderful efforts," Secretary Bysiewicz said. "Casting a vote for our leaders is the very root of our Democracy and has been since our country was first established. It's a very simple task, but its implications are historic and immeasurable."

This was the fourth time that West Hartford has won the Democracy Challenge Cup and the third time for Middlebury. Shelton took the award for the first time this year.

"It is heartening to see that a new community, Shelton, has joined the list of voter turnout winners. When we first started doing this, we had hoped that towns would use new techniques to encourage even better voter turnout, and it would appear that Shelton has moved into that category," said EHCA President Scot Mackinnon. "West Hartford and Middlebury, both past winners, continue to demonstrate continued excellence in voter turnout, and we all have a lot to learn from their consistency."

Under the Democracy Cup Challenge criteria, towns with less than 15,000 Registered voters are considered small, mid-size municipalities have between 15-35,000 voters and large towns over 35,000.

Each winning town will be able to host and display a Democracy Cup trophy through next year's November elections. Trophy presentation ceremonies are currently being scheduled for January 2006.

**\*\*\*END\*\*\***

## Democracy Cup Winners 2000-2005

<b>Year</b>	<b>Small Towns</b>	<b>Midsized Towns</b>	<b>Large Towns</b>
2000	Essex	Westport	West Hartford
2001	Washington	Trumbull	Waterbury
2002	Middlebury	Glastonbury	West Hartford
2003	Washington	Naugatuck	West Hartford
2004	Washington	Wethersfield	Fairfield
2005	Middlebury	Shelton	West Hartford