



MAYOR CHRIS BOLLWAGE

CITY OF ELIZABETH

PRESS RELEASE



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“YOUTH OF THE YEAR” AWARD

ELIZABETH, N.J. May 28, 2009 – Elizabeth students were given the opportunity to manage the City as a part of the 55th Annual Youth in City Government Day. As a part of the day’s events Mayor Bollwage presented the prestigious Mayor’s Youth of The Year Award to LeighAnn V. Moreira, a senior of Elizabeth High School. The Award represents the pride that the City of Elizabeth has for its students of today and its citizens of the future.

Students from Elizabeth’s public and parochial high schools assumed the positions of City officials during a morning conference at City Council Chamber in Elizabeth’s City Hall. The young officials spent a portion of the morning learning job responsibilities from their city mentors.

“Each year, this unique opportunity provides a forum for some of Elizabeth’s most talented students to join City officials and participate in an exciting dialogue and exchange of ideas, resulting in a wonderful learning experience for all,” said Mayor J. Christian Bollwage. “It is inspiring to see the students’ eagerness to learn about City Government and how well they perform in their assumed roles of City officials.”

During the day, students familiarized themselves with the job responsibilities of their assigned City Officials and were given a unique opportunity to manage the city and experience municipal government at work first-hand. The students then took an external tour of the city to view first-hand the economic development and new initiatives throughout the community.

Following the tour, students enjoyed a luncheon and awards ceremony at the Crown Plaza Grand Ballroom. The day’s activities concluded with the students participating in a special afternoon City Council meeting, where student leaders were presented certificates of merit and observed first-hand the business of city government.

Every year, a committee of representative members of the community is assigned the task of selecting one student from among many qualified others nominated by the principals of the public, private, and parochial high schools in Elizabeth. This year’s committee members included: Mr. Jerome Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Family and Community Outreach for the Elizabeth Board of Education, Mr. Joseph Caporaso, a retired Elementary School Principal and Mr. Ken Richuso, a Rotary Club Representative.

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Since its inception 44 years ago, the “Youth of the Year” Award has recognized students for their leadership in school and for their service to the community-at-large.

Constance DePasquale, a Halsey House Counselor at Elizabeth High School says “LeighAnn is a serious and dedicated student who is self motivated and genuinely interested in learning. She is cooperative, optimistic, resourceful and self-reliant. She demonstrates definite strength of character and a high degree of leadership ability.”

LeighAnn excels in the academic environment. Elizabeth High School recognized her academic achievement by bestowing on her the Principal’s and Teacher’s Scholar Award, Writing and Composition Award and the English Department’s Poem Award. She was also recognized on the National level as a member of “Who’s Who Among American High School Students” as well as earning marks to solidify a place on the National Honor Roll.

Ms. Moreira is involved in extra curricular activities and is an active community volunteer. She plays a very active role in the Director’s vision, rehearsals, and performances for Community Theater as a leading member in both Talent Shows and Dance Shows. She volunteers her limited time and talents selflessly serving Thanksgiving Dinner at local Community Shelters, organizing and participating in walks for Crohns and Colitis as well as running a 1950s Fashion Show to raise money to help fight Autism.

She has maintained involvement in the Girl Scouts of America for over ten years. Last year, LeighAnn earned the Girl Scouts’ highest honor, The Gold Award. Only one percent of girls who join scouts earn this prominent award.

As the Captain, of the Elizabeth High School’s Girl’s Soccer team, she has earned the “Most Improved Soccer Player Award.” She has taken the knowledge that she has gained on the field and applies it to her role in coaching the Elizabeth Education Association Summer Soccer Program.

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