

# The Connecticut General Assembly



**House Democrats**  
**Office of House Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz**

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## **Local Middle Schoolers Recognized For Civics Essays** *Winners Join Rep. Aresimowicz at State Capitol*

House Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz (D – Berlin/Southington) recognized six middle school students from Berlin and Southington for being the top participants in an essay contest sponsored by the state lawmaker.

In April, Rep. Aresimowicz asked middle school students from Berlin and Southington to submit essays describing one project or initiative that would help improve their community. A winner and two runners-ups were selected from each town.

“I started this contest to inspire students to share their ideas and get involved in the community, so it was thrilling to receive more than 100 essays from students this year,” said Aresimowicz. “All of the ideas that the students wrote about were great, so it was difficult to narrow it down to just a few top entries.”

Caitlyn Lennehan, who will be entering the seventh grade at McGee Middle School, was Berlin’s first place winner for her idea to create a program called “Helping Hands” that would allow middle and high school students to visit with senior citizens at the senior center on a regular basis. The other two finalists, McGee Middle School students Gianna Uba and Jake Camacho, also wrote about ideas that aimed at helping the seniors of Berlin.

Southington’s first place winner was Megan Wadman, who will be entering the seventh grade at Kennedy Middle School. Wadman wants to start a blight committee in Southington where volunteers can clean and fix up different areas of the town that need it most. Kennedy Middle School students Anneliese Baillargeon and Griffin Prushinski, were the other finalists from Southington. Their essays also included ideas for different initiatives to help keep the town clean.

“I wanted to engage the students and help them understand that one idea can really make a difference. Since the top winners in each town had similar ideas, my hope is that they can work together to put their ideas into action,” said Aresimowicz. “We have already begun discussions with the Senior Center in Berlin and the town of Southington to implement these ideas.”

Rep. Aresimowicz invited the top entry winners and their families to the State Capitol in Hartford for lunch and a private tour of the Capitol. The students were able to speak with Rep. Aresimowicz about their ideas and were presented with official citations from the General Assembly.

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**Joe Aresimowicz is serving his sixth term representing the 30th House District of Berlin and Southington in the Connecticut General Assembly, where he is House Majority Leader.**