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Kids Voting USA Honors the *Star Tribune* and *Roberta Worrell*
National Civic Education Program Lauds Local Media Support

The *Star Tribune* and *Roberta Worrell*, director of community affairs, were named recipients of the national 2006 Jim Batten Media Partnership Award by Kids Voting USA. "This award is presented annually to a media professional that not only provides key support to the Kids Voting USA program in its community, but that also models and inspires positive citizen involvement," said Christopher E. Heller, president and CEO, Kids Voting USA. "Roberta Worrell and the *Star Tribune* are prime examples of this vision in action." Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer, honorary co-chair of Kids Voting Minnesota, presented the award to Ms. Worrell.

"It is the *Star Tribune's* commitment to strengthening our community's participation in democracy and *Roberta Worrell's* personal commitment to making a difference in her hometown, that is key to the success of Kids Voting Minneapolis," said Jane Ellis, president of Kids Voting Minneapolis and principal of Marcy Open School. While the newspaper hosted the initial meeting that brought together community leaders to launch the affiliate, Worrell agreed to serve as acting executive director. She oversaw a successful inaugural year effort in which over 7,600 students voted at their neighborhood polling places with the help of 400 community volunteers, many of whom were *Star Tribune* employees. Ms. Worrell is a native of northeast Minneapolis and a graduate of Edison High School.

Kids Voting Minneapolis received many in-kind contributions from the *Star Tribune* including design services, advertising space, a telephone hotline for volunteer signup, administrative support and meeting facilities. The newspaper also granted \$10,000 in 2005 for general operating support and another \$10,000 leadership grant in 2006.

This award is named in honor of former Knight-Ridder newspaper chairman, James K. Batten, a visionary leader who believed in the ability of the media to reconnect citizens and spark democracy in action. In 1990, he was instrumental in the expansion of Kids Voting from a fledgling program in Arizona to a national civics education organization.

Kids Voting USA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to secure the future of democracy by preparing young people to be educated, engaged voters. For more information, visit www.kidsvotingusa.org.

Founded in 2004, Kids Voting Minneapolis, an affiliate of Kids Voting USA, educates and engages young people and their families in voting. The program combines classroom activities with the opportunity for K-12 students to begin the habit of going to their polling place to "vote" in city, state and national elections. For more information, go to www.kidsvotingminneapolis.org.

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