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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Nikki Young, Publicity, PrimaDonna Productions
(210) 822-3552 nikki@primadonnaproductions.com

Winning 5th Grade Writers Celebrate New Citizens

SAN ANTONIO – In the 2007-2008 school year, over 100 local 5th grade students participated in “*Celebrate America*”, a writing contest sponsored by the **American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF)** and facilitated locally by the immigration law firm of **De Mott, McChesney, Curtright & Associates**. Now, after writing about the benefits of immigration to our society, the six winning students will have the opportunity to take part in the process of personally welcoming immigrants to our country.

U.S. Magistrate Judge John W. Primomo, of the Western District of Texas, has invited the students to read their entries – five essays and one poem, all on the topic “*Why I Am Glad America Is A Nation of Immigrants*” - at a **naturalization ceremony on Tuesday, June 17 at 2:00 P.M.** at **Laurie Auditorium (715 Stadium Drive, on the campus of Trinity University)**, where approximately 900 immigrants will become U.S. citizens.

“Judge Primomo's invitation is an incredible honor for the winning students”, says **Joseph B. De Mott**, founding partner of **De Mott, McChesney, Curtright & Associates**. “After reading their entries in the contest, it was clear that the students had a personal interest and perspective on the issues surrounding immigration. Now, as they welcome new citizens to our nation, they will have the chance to see the benefits of immigration firsthand. It will be a great learning experience for them.”

This year’s **public school winners** are:

1st place: Chazelle Rivera, John Glenn Elementary

2nd place: Gilbert Herrera, Olmos Elementary

3rd place: Jenevie A. Montez, Brewer Elementary

This year’s **private school winners** are:

1st place: Julia Toney, Blessed Sacrament Catholic School

2nd place: Arycelis Cortez, St. Philip of Jesus

3rd place: Maddie Carrola, Blessed Sacrament Catholic School

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The six students presented their winning entries at a formal awards ceremony held on Saturday, May 10, at Market Square in San Antonio; their entries will also be posted on the law firm's website at www.demottusa.com.

"After I read my essay at Market Square, I thought the contest was over," says Rivera. "Now I'm excited, because I get to read it to immigrants and see them become citizens."

"Since our firm began facilitating the contest five years ago, I have visited schools and spoken to students about the impact immigration has on our society," says De Mott. "Now, as these six students prepare to speak before an audience of new citizens, I hope they will come away from the experience with an even greater appreciation of that impact. Now, they are not just writing about the issue; they are participating in it."

Background of AILF

The American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of Immigration Law and policy and the value of immigration to American society; to promote public service and excellence in the practice of Immigration Law; and to advancing fundamental fairness and due process under the law of immigrants. For more information, please visit www.aifl.org.

Background of De Mott, McChesney, Curtright & Associates

The De Mott, McChesney, Curtright & Associates Law Firm consists of 9 San Antonio lawyers who practice Immigration Law exclusively. The founding partner, Joseph B. De Mott, has been practicing Immigration Law in San Antonio for 32 years, and has been certified as a specialist in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization since 1981. For more information, please visit www.demottusa.com or call 210.590.1844.

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