

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



KATE BROWNING
County Legislator, 3rd District
Public Safety Committee, Chair

Media Release

April 14, 2014

COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Legislator Browning Honors “Patriot Pen” Winners

Yaphank, NY – Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) holds an annual essay contest to encourage our youth to examine our nation’s history. Local VFW Capt. William H. Neuss Post 6194 partners on the program with Longwood Senior and Junior High Schools, and Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) joined the VFW and the Longwood Central School District to honor this year’s essay contest winners at the Yaphank Fire Department on April 10.

VFW believes strongly in good citizenship and fostering patriotism, and the contest allows youthful minds to look at their own experiences in modern American society. Annually, more than 100,000 students from grades 6-8 (nationwide) enter. One first-place winner from each state competes to win one of 46 national awards totaling \$46,000. The national first-place winner wins \$5,000 and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

Students draft a 300-400 word essay, expressing their views based on an — always patriotic — annual theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief. This year’s theme was “What Patriotism Means to Me” and the winners were 8th grader Victoria Lynn Oswald and 7th grader Susan M. Zhang.

This year high school students also competed in an audio essay competition themed, “Why I’m Optimistic About Our Nation’s Future”. The winners were 12th graders, Mark Knudsen, Natalie Ballato, and Victoria Lacerda.

“The Patriot Pen program is a great way to instill a sense of pride for our country in our students, and teaches them the importance of our history,” stated Legislator Browning. “It was an honor to congratulate this year’s winners.”

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