

## Human Rights Essay Contest Award Winners Announced

By Nancy Clark, Commissioner

The Austin Human Rights Commission has just completed the annual Essay Contest for middle school students. For the past five years the Austin Commission has joined together with the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions. All middle school students from Austin were encouraged to participate. The topic is selected by the staff of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions and distributed to member commissions, like Austin. The Austin Commission then distributed the information to the staff at both Ellis and Pacelli Middle Schools. Students were to write their thoughts about one or both of the following questions:

Do people have a human right to live wherever they choose on this earth? Why or why not?  
What recommendations do you have regarding the current controversy surrounding immigration to the United States?

We had another successful year. Many students worked hard writing essays. The essays were collected, and one of Austin's writing groups took the essays, carefully read through them and selected the winners. There were many excellent entries. The Writers Group had a difficult time selecting the winning essays from so many talented young authors.

This year's first place winner is Christina Sforza from Ellis. She won a \$100.00 savings bond, Gabe Ramirez from Ellis is the second place winner, and he won a \$75.00 savings bond. Cody Carlson from Ellis is the third place winner, and he won a \$50.00 savings bond. All of these essays have been sent to the state level for competition with winners from other cities in Minnesota.

The commission would like to thank US Bank for donating a \$100.00 savings bond, Accentra Credit Union for donating a \$75.00 savings bond and Farmer's and Merchants for donating a \$50.00 savings bond. We appreciate their support of this project and their support of the young writers who participated in the contest.