

Winners: 2006 Youth Voice Advocate Awards

The winners for the Activist Individual category were Lynne Borden, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist at the University of Arizona Family Studies and Human Development Department, and Regina Kelly, Executive Director of Voices, Inc. Borden and Kelly each received an engraved recognition award and \$2500 was given in Borden's name to Skrappy's, and \$2500 in Kelly's name to VOICES.

The winners for the Model Organization category were VOICES, Inc. and YWCA of Tucson Youth Racial Justice Program. They each received a \$2500 discretionary grant award, as well as an engraved recognition award.

According to the group of youth who comprised the selection committee, a good advocate is one who shows a strong commitment to Youth Voice through dedicated, long-term efforts and support, works closely with youth in all aspects of their work, and encourages others to be advocates for Youth Voice as well. They felt that the four winners stood out as exceptional in all of these areas.

Lynne Borden's Youth Voice Advocacy accomplishments range from grassroots work with local youth to state and national committee participation. Among her many activities, Borden is the chair of the Governor's Task Force for Youth Development (which includes a Youth Voice & Advocacy component), teaches a Positive Youth Development class at the University of Arizona, and works one-on-one with youth at the downtown youth center, Skrappy's, to develop a model of civic engagement for youth that promotes community change.

Regina Kelly is the founding Executive Director of Voices, Inc. Kelly has been the driving force behind the success and expansion of Voices, Inc. through her tireless efforts to fundraise for the program, increase support, and most importantly, increase distribution of the articles and photography created by youth through the program. In addition, she is a member of the Youth Development Coalition and served on the Governor's Task Force for Youth Development.

Voices, Inc. is a youth voice organization that asks youth to see their communities differently through developing their media arts abilities. Voices, Inc. focuses on both strengthening the voices of individual youth, and then making sure that those voices are heard in the community through wide distribution of quality publications.

The YWCA of Tucson's Youth Racial Justice Program provides opportunities for both youth and adults to listen to youth voices. The program presents a forum for students from all over town to come together and talk and learn about how they can take action against racism in their schools and communities. Youth volunteers work to facilitate events and workshops, plan presentations, and act as visible representatives of the program.

2006 was the first year Every Voice in Action presented Youth Voice Advocate Awards. It is exciting to hear about the great things people in Tucson are doing to promote Youth Voice.