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## Congrats to champs, HB2554

First off, I want to congratulate the Fountain Hills High School girls soccer team for capturing the Division III State Championship.

It is the first state championship in girls soccer for Fountain Hills since the school opened.

They defeated Chandler Seaton Catholic 2-0.

The team pulled together after losing senior sweeper Jess Stricker, one of the team's captains, was knocked out of the game with a concussion while going up for a ball on a free kick.

Their overall record for the season was 20-3-1.

The next topic I want to address is HB2554, a piece of legislation introduced by Fountain Hills' own Rep. John Kavanagh.

The bill was passed by the House Technology & Infrastructure Committee by a 5-1 vote last Thursday, was expected to be reviewed by the House Rules Committee at the beginning of this week and could be fast tracked to a full House vote this week. Basically, the bill eliminates publication requirements applicable for corporate and LLC filings with the Arizona Corporation Commission including the formation, dissolution or any other changes in corporate status.

In his guest editorial in this week's *Times*, Rep. Kavanagh states that the posting of printed notices in newspapers of new business startups creates "needless work and publication expenses."

He said the only ones that benefit are the newspapers who "rake in advertising revenue."

The *Times* does print these Public Notices because we qualify as a general circulation newspaper. We attempt to make the process as easy for a person placing the public notice as we can. For this service, we charge \$48.74 for the three-time publication of an LLC filing and \$114.43 for a corporation filing. The longer tax-exempt corporation filing charge is \$141.08. These figures include sales tax.

I don't think those prices should be a hardship for any startup business. If it is, then that business has bigger financial problems ahead.

We took in approximately \$48,000 in revenue from public notice advertising last year. That also means the Town of Fountain Hills collected some \$1200 in sales tax from those sales.

That's not a great amount in the overall scheme of things but that will be lost revenue to the town.

In addition to being printed in the paper, the public notices are also posted on *The Times* website and are permanently posted on the Arizona Newspapers Association website PublicNoticeAds.com, which is free, searchable and funded by Arizona newspapers through the association.

That would mean there are three chances of someone seeing the public notice versus the single place that is being proposed for the state website.

Newspapers, including ours, also provide affidavits as legal proof of notice. The public often relies on these affidavits and archived records to prove that notice was provided. Government cannot replicate this critical function as the web still does not have a tool in place to verify the authenticity of an original post - a problem that could create a legal nightmare.

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# THE POWER OF WORDS

## Teens bare souls in Coalition essay contest

By Ryan Winslett  
*Times Reporter*

Fountain Hills High School students willing to speak their mind about drugs, alcohol, peer pressure and more were recognized for their efforts last week as part of the 2014 Fountain Hills Coalition Essay Contest.

Out of nearly 300 entrants, junior Kaylin George brought home the honors for the best essay.

Earlier this year, students were tasked with writing essays tackling one of three topics.

They could focus on their concerns for their own generation and what could be done to address those concerns, life lessons and how they've been used to empower the student to deal with peer pressure, or they could consider a teacher or adult who has had a positive impact in their life and the results of that influence.

In total, 280 students submitted essays for the competition, all of whom were awarded a free Wendy's Frosty for their efforts.

On Friday, Feb. 14, students who wrote the top three essays and 14 runners up, along with their parents, teachers, community members, contest judges and coalition members, were treated to a Redendo's catered lunch and awards ceremony.

The 14 honorable mention essay writers each received a \$25 reward while third place took home \$50, second place took home \$100 and first place took home \$500.

"Congratulations to the students who took part in the contest," said Fountain Hills Unified School District Superintendent Tom Lawrence.

"I'm sure some of you took some emotional risks to put yourselves out there and tell your stories, and for that you should be commended."

Essays ranged with a variety of topics including substance abuse, the power of words, family, peer pressure, bullying and more. Students recognized with honorable mentions were Gabrielle Biehl, Andrew Cooper, Brooke Hall, Olivia Lagnese, Rebekah Noble, Katie Petkus, Tyler Wedding, Mikaeli Blake, Nataly Gruender, Danielle Hinni, Kiley Munch, Dominique Pettit, Marissa Phillips and Jalin Yoder.

Excerpts from each essay were read as students were recognized. Olivia Lagnese wrote about a wish to see a yearning to accomplish great things in the faces of her peers.

"To look into eyes and know that they too will not be satisfied until all their highest mountains are climbed," she said.

"The people of my generation need to see that when each individual sets out to live with their pulse,

their drive, to find and catch their dream, we will all create something that is bigger than ourselves."

Dominique Pettit wrote about the impact her father has had on her life, saying that she remembers his messages about being positive and loving the people in her life, while Rebekah Noble discussed the lessons and love she has experienced thanks to a sister living with autism.

Andrew Cooper tackled the technology that infests the everyday life of a teen, stating that the desire to say in touch with everyone, at every moment of the day, detracts from enjoying a life lived in the moment.

"Turning off the phones allows us to focus on what's happening all around us instead of what is happening on a four-inch rectangle an arm's length away," he added.

Taking third place in the essay contest was Lucas Folch, discussing the concerns he and his peers face in day to day life.

Second place went to Sara Karoli, who spoke about the challenges she overcame going to a new school in a new country and the teacher who helped her find her true potential.

Kaylin George's first place essay [see attached] discussed the impact one can have on a small scale and how, if enough people are doing enough small wonders, it can add up to big changes.

## Building

By Kaylin George

From the time that I was a teetering tot, clumsily grasping building blocks with awkward, baby-drool hands, I have been told that any job concerning building is the most honest of all professions.

What I thought was nonsense before, I now understand. Building is creating. It's taking something less useful, and making it purposeful. It's taking something less beautiful, and making it worth seeing. As a child, many adults shape the environment of your life. Teachers, parents, and other leaders do more than supervise. They inspire. They build. If there's one thing I've learned from all these adult leaders, it's that "making a difference" can mean anything from monumental efforts of grandeur to a small act of kindness.

There comes an important time in a teen's life when they fall asleep as an unripe juvenile, a ragamuffin in middle school, and awakes as a magnificent, bright-eyed intellectual, ready for high school. While I was making my own glorious metamorphosis from fifteen to fifteen and a half, preparing for my entrance into the majestic world of high school, I met an amazing teacher. His name was Mr. Cameron and he was a builder. The lessons in his classroom amounted to more than just textbook pages, more than molecules and historical figures.

He taught us how to be leaders. One day, Mr. Cameron told me a story. He said, "Once an ocean tide rolled thousands of starfish out onto the beach, where they were dying without water. An old man came along and spent hours throwing individual starfish back to the sea. Eventually another man walked up to him and asked, 'Why do you bother throwing those starfish back? There are so many. It won't make a difference.' The old man bent and took up another starfish. He threw it back to safety and replied, 'It made a difference for that one.'"

At the time, I didn't understand Mr. Cameron's story. Later, he encouraged me to join an organization that he helped to direct. It was called "W.E.B" and it stood for "Where Everyone Belongs." A school program designed to provide younger students with older role models, the club paired me up with students four years younger than myself and encouraged me to act as a role model for them.

One of the children I mentored was named Ben. He was a tiny and polite boy with special needs. I led Ben and the other children around school and taught them all the absolute essential knowledge necessary for survival in the world of middle school: where classes were, how to open lockers, which cafeteria lady ladled out the most generous amount of food, etc. The fifth graders were thrilled to have such a cool-cat eighth grader as a buddy, but it seemed like the rest of the school didn't pay any attention to W.E.B. or what we stood for.

Ben's older brother was my age, and he was known as something not too short of a punk. Too tough. Too cool. He never did his school work or listened to adults like a proper blossoming young man should. One day, Ben's older brother approached me and asked me for my help. He explained that Ben's feelings had been hurt by the harsh words of a classmate. I was shocked because the role of a sensitive and concerned older brother was not one I was accustomed to seeing him in.

I approached Ben and encouraged him not to feel disheartened. I promised that the bully who had said such cruel things simply didn't understand him. Ben considered me with bottomless chocolate eyes. They were childish eyes, far too large for his head, and yet still untarnished and perfect.

"Do you think there's something wrong with me?" he asked. I replied, "I don't just think Ben, I KNOW that there's nothing wrong with you." His smile glowed. He hugged me randomly and skipped away. I stood still for a while, blinking after him. Afterwards, Ben was no longer troubled by his peer's teasing. That day I finally understood what Mr. Cameron's story had meant. I didn't need to fix a universe full of problems; I didn't have to change the whole word. I had made a difference for Ben. The same way Mr. Cameron had made a difference for me.

I have realized that no matter what I do in life, I want to be a leader. No matter what I do, I choose to build.

Lucas Folch, Kaylin George and Sarah Karoli are joined by their administrators, Coalition members, teachers and event sponsors.



Essay contest winners and their teachers get together for a group photo.



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