

Southwest Institute for ViolenceFree Learning
Changing Public Policy Through Personal Initiative

March 8, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Dr. Kathleen Wishnick
SWIVL Executive Director
(520) 398-1166
Info@swivl.org
<http://www.swivl.org>
P.O. Box 670, Arivaca, AZ, 85601

Brisenia Flores Memorial Award

On March 11, 2010, the Southwest Institute for ViolenceFree Learning will present the first annual Brisenia Flores Memorial Award to four sixth grade students from Sopori Elementary School. The presentation will take place at 8:30 am at Sopori Elementary School, 5000 W Arivaca Rd, Amado, AZ.

Four students from Sopori Elementary School (Amado, Arizona) are recipients of the first annual Southwest Institute for ViolenceFree Learning (SWIVL) Brisenia Flores Memorial Award. Each student winner described their relationship with a companion or farmed animal and how their relationship has made them more responsible and a better person.

Four sixth grade students will each receive a certificate of accommodation recognizing their compassion and responsible behavior and a \$25.00 gift card from SWIVL.

The purpose of the SWIVL Brisenia Flores Memorial Award is to acknowledge the beauty and creative spirit of children – a spirit that was exemplified by Brisenia Flores. Brisenia’s young life was tragically taken through a brutal and senseless killing. According to SWIVL co-founder, Dr. Kathleen Wishnick, the Brisenia Flores Memorial Award not only pays tribute to Brisenia, the SWIVL Award also promotes the view that our schools need to encourage compassion, creativity, and responsible behavior in our children. Dr. Wishnick, a life long educator and most recently Associate Vice President of American River College in Sacramento, California, believes our schools are becoming less civil and more violent.

According to Wishnick, the rush to standardize and regulate our schools has resulted in few opportunities for our children to become independent and self-reliant. Instead, Wishnick

believes our schools need more parent and family involvement and more community-based partnerships.

SWIVL promotes the view that ViolenceFree can be created through personal self-reliance and accountability in a school-community culture that encourages a strong work ethic, independence, and innovation. Through compassionate behaviors, based on the Golden Rule, our schools can create student-to-student relationships that are ViolenceFree. SWIVL collaborates with parents and families, teachers and school officials, and community and business leaders, to create a culture of success where all individuals have the freedom to explore and maximize their talents and strengths. Starting with children and their families, SWIVL is committed to creating a world that believes all children have special gifts that should be nurtured and valued in our school-communities. Through the Brisenia Flores Memorial Award, the relationships that children have with companion and farmed animals provide wonderful opportunities to develop caring, concerned, and compassionate behaviors. From this Award, SWIVL hopes the dreams of a little girl will be realized through the lives of other children. According to Kathleen Wishnick, we celebrate the young life of Brisenia and we hope that good people everywhere will keep her memory alive.

###

OUR Mission: SWIVL works to create a ViolenceFree environment through personal investment. All services provided by SWIVL increase personal and social capacity to accomplish goals and mobilize resources to promote a ViolenceFree environment. SWIVL works with other public and private organizations to take a systemic approach to ending all forms of violence, including animal cruelty, child abuse, and domestic violence. Formed in 2003 as a 501(c)3, SWIVL is a nonprofit organization established to respond to the growing state of violence and discord in our families, communities, nation, and world. SWIVL promotes the view that violence can be eliminated or mitigated through the development of a culture of success - beliefs and attitudes that encourage a personal progressive culture and social independent climate