

# Four chosen as winners of Biehl awards

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*Journal Staff Writer*

**F**our New Mexico youths were honored recently for outstanding contributions to their communities.

The Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award winners each received a \$1,000 scholarship and were honored at a ceremony last month.

The winners were:

- **Alejandra Carmona**, 17, of Albuquerque's South Valley Academy, won first place in the 13- to 18-year-old category. She and her mother arrived in New Mexico 12 years ago from Mexico. She is her school's National Honor Society president and is involved in South Valley Women in

Action, which promotes education and healthy living for local teens.

- **Fionna Walters**, 19, of Mexican Springs won first place in the 19- to 26-year-old category. She grew up on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico but moved to Pennsylvania when she was 15. However, she continued to support her community by working for a new playground in Mexican Springs, and she successfully lobbied the Legislature for \$75,000 for the project. She attends the University of New Mexico Gallup branch.

- **Alex Wirth**, 16, a student at Santa Fe Prep, won second place in the 13- to 18-year-old category. He led his school's fundraiser for the Santa Fe Food Depot, volunteered at Sen.

Jeff Bingaman's Santa Fe office and is chairman of the Santa Fe Mayor's Youth Advisory Board.

- **Arielle Hawney**, 20, of Sapello won second place in the 19- to 26-year-old category. She spent a year volunteering at the Las Vegas Peace and Justice Center, working on issues at the San Miguel Detention Center, a Taser policy for local law enforcement, radio shows and community education. She attends Earlham College in Indiana.

The award was inspired by Amy Biehl, a graduate of Santa Fe High School who was killed in a 1993 riot in South Africa. It was established in 1993 by the nonprofit New Mexico Voices for Children.

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