

ACTIVIST HONORED

⁰⁴Sapello student recognized

Submitted to the Optic

Arielle Hawney of Sapello was named Honoree for her age group (19- to 26-year-olds) in the 16th Annual Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards ceremony last Friday.

Hawney received a \$1,000 cash prize from New Mexico Voices for Children and an awards sculpture.

In all, 19 youths from across the state were recognized for their vision, initiative, and dedication to community service. In addition, two youths from each of the two age groups (13-18 and 19-26) were named winners and two from each age group were named honorees. All four received monetary awards.

The annual Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards ceremony was part of NM Voices' Spirit of Hope Celebration in October in

Albuquerque.

Hawney, age 20 moved to Montezuma, N.M., and began her service to the community as a way to become familiar with the town and its people. She was a Special Olympics basketball coach, a mathematics tutor, and became one of the driving forces at the United World Col-

lege behind a student-led effort to become certified HIV/AIDS peer educators.

Hawney also initiated a quilting service project, whereby students at the college learned to quilt, and the quilts were then gifted to others. Some of the quilts were sent to orphanages in Bolivia, while others went to local patients at the Behavior Health Institute of New Mexico.

Simultaneously, she

began volunteering at the Las Vegas Peace & Justice Center. Her service with the center included: working with the San Miguel County Detention Center, coordinating statewide non-partisan election monitoring, producing and co-hosting weekly Community Peace radio shows, community education, and assisting individuals in need.

Hawney is currently attending college in Indiana. The Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award celebrates New Mexico youths, ages 13 through 26, who have worked to make the world a better place. Amy Biehl, a graduate of Santa Fe High School, was killed while working to end apartheid in South Africa in 1993. She was 26 years

old. NM Voices has given the award in Amy's honor since 1993.

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Ray A. Mares/Courtesy photo
Arielle Hawney (center) receives an Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award from New Mexico Voices for Children for her outstanding community service work. She is flanked by Julius Harrington (left), who serves on NM Voices' Board of Directors, and Greg Webb (right) with New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism.