

Takoma Park Youth Council Newsletter

THE TAKOMA PARK POLICE EXPLORERS

The Takoma Park Police Explorer Post is a program that familiarizes young men and women get with law enforcement. The objective of the program is to help young people cultivate integrity and become good citizens. They leave with a background in law enforcement and a sense of honor, integrity and leadership. Explorers work closely with members from many different areas of the Takoma Park Police Department. During class they learn the basics

MISSION STATEMENT

The Takoma Park Youth Council is dedicated to representing, promoting, and advocating for the interests of Takoma Park's diverse and enthusiastic young people. The Youth Council controls the content of this newsletter, the purpose of which is to inform the public of upcoming projects, initiatives and events, as well as of issues that the Council feels are important to Takoma Park's youth.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kiran Kochar McCabe
(Chairperson), Ward 6

Emma Morganstein (Vice
Chairperson), Ward 1

Elliot Davey, Ward 1

Adelaide Harris, Ward 2

George Ashford, Ward 2

Rachel Grupp, Ward 3

Asha Henry, Ward 6

Christiane Yimgnia (Police
Explorers Liason), Ward 4

Ashleigh Nugent (Advisor), Ward 2

regarding the diverse components of the police organization.

In addition to receiving basic knowledge in law enforcement, the Police Explorers attend city events where they get the

chance to help the community by putting what they have learned into practice by making sure everyone feels safe. Community service hours are offered either during classes or events. The Police Explorers program is a great way to gain self confidence and cultivate leadership skills. If you're interested, please contact the Takoma Park Police Department to learn more!



A group of the Police Explorers marching in a Takoma Park event

A group of the Police Explorers volunteering at Celebrate Takoma

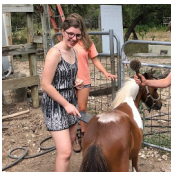


SUMMER SNIPPETS!



While not seemingly busy all the time, **Kiran** had a full summer. Between hanging out with friends, trying to get her summer homework done in a productive manner, visiting family, and trying to maneuver the whole college process, there hasn't been a lot of time for much else. One of the highlights from early on in the summer was when Kiran attended a government conference as part of the Maryland Youth & Government program called the Conference on National Affairs. This was her third year attending, and she loved every bit of debate and social time with her peers from all over the country! Kiran's excited and nervous for her senior year of high school, but she's looking forward to what she hopes will be a great school year!

Emma started the summer working as a canvasser for a county council campaign. This was an amazing experience and a fantastic way to learn about how to make a difference at a local level. The rest of Emma's summer was spent working as a fellow for Representative Jamie Raskin's program called Democracy Summer where she focused on how to make change on a national level, alongside our very own Elliot Davey. Emma had a great summer and is looking forward to what comes next in the year.



As soon as school ended, politics took over. **Adelaide** worked for District 19 State Delegate candidate Vaughn Stewart as a field organizer. After the election, she shifted her focus to an internship with the voting rights group Spread the Vote Georgia along with part-time work as a paralegal. Adelaide enjoyed the opportunity the long days of summer brought to catch up on reading, swimming, and simply spending time with friends.

This summer was all politics, all the time. **Elliot** began their summer as a volunteer for a county council primary campaign, and then moved into working as a Democracy Summer fellow for Representative Jamie Raskin. Through listening to speakers and field experience, they learned more about how to lobby a representative, how to phonebank and knock on doors for a campaign, and what issues are important in the U.S. today. And of course, all of this was done alongside our own talented Emma Morganstein.



One of the most notable events of the summer was **George's** three weeks at Teen Adventure Quaker Camp. He had an incredible experience backpacking, rafting, and doing service activities in the Appalachian mountains. Since he's been back, George has worked as a lifeguard and hung out with his friends. The last part of George's summer involved spending some time on Cayuga Lake in upstate New York with his relatives.

Rachel started the summer working with younger kids from preschool to 3rd grade teaching them about the outdoors! She had an incredible time helping these kids learn about the importance of our ecosystem, planet, and the animals that inhabit it. Soon after that, Rachel attended her first summer at a performing and creative arts sleep away camp. She is so excited for the school year ahead.



Asha attended a sleepaway camp focused on marine biology at the Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge, Maryland. There she learned about the effects of climate change on the local marine life of the Chesapeake Bay and how small changes in one's daily life can be the difference in saving the Bay. She also attended an intensive fencing camp at Princeton University, training with some of the best coaches in the world. While home, Asha worked as a junior counselor at her local fencing club's summer camp. She also went backcountry camping with her family and friend in West Virginia. She is excited for the adventure that the next school year will bring.

COMPOST IN TAKOMA SCHOOLS

On April 9, the Youth Council decided to take action on the large amount of food waste in Montgomery County schools, especially those in Takoma Park. After speaking with Brenda Platt, Director of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance© Composting for Community Project and a Co-Director of the Institute itself, who has worked on composting projects in Montgomery County Schools in the past, we were informed that composting is not an “approved activity” for student clubs in Montgomery County public schools (MCPS). With that, we decided that our first step in the process of making MCPS more sustainable should be to make composting an approved activity so that student clubs can begin these efforts on their own. We’ve begun a conversation with members of the MCPS administration about how we can bring this about and look forward to more sustainable schools for our city!

PLASTIC STRAW BAN

On June 11, the Youth Council decided to write a letter to the City Council in support of a ban on plastic straws, provided that a small amount of plastic straws remain available to those who need them to eat or drink. The full letter is included below.

Dear Takoma Park City Council Members,

We, the Takoma Park Youth Council, fully support the ban on single use plastic straws as proposed by the youth activist group Takoma Park Doesn’t Suck.

Jurisdictions all across the country have passed legislation to similar effects, as have various corporations and chain restaurants. This wave of activism has great momentum and Takoma Park would help elevate the cause by participating.

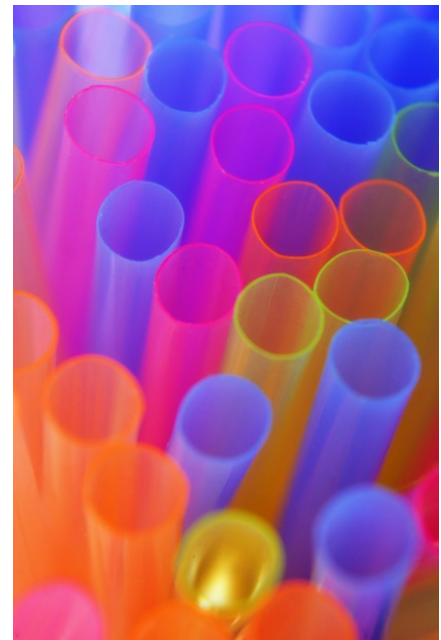
Single use plastic straws are impossible to recycle, a fact that leads to far too much waste dumped in landfills or floating in our oceans. While straws make up a small amount of total plastic in the ocean, a straw ban is a simple and effective way to make a dent in the huge amounts of material endangering animal life and contaminating the water. Additionally, it can feel difficult for individual citizens to cause change when it comes to the plastic waste caused by corporations’ pollution. However, straws are something individual people interact with on a daily basis. Instituting a ban would increase levels of awareness and allow for citizens of Takoma Park to feel a greater sense of efficacy when it comes to making an environmental change.

Takoma Park Doesn’t Suck is a wonderful organization. The young members have shown great skill in organizing, acting, and publicizing their cause. The Youth Council would like to highlight the passion shown by these young people and remind the Council that listening to and acknowledging youth activism is an important part of community building.

We understand that some people may have mobility issues that would make straws a necessary part of consuming foods and liquids. We propose that this is considered as part of the ban. A simple solution would be to have restaurants continue to stock a significantly smaller supply of straws, available upon request. In this way, all citizens can participate in Takoma Park public life while the city moves forward towards a greener future.

Sincerely,

The 2017-2018 Takoma Park Youth Council



Single use plastic straws

FUNDRAISER RESULTS

On Sunday, June 10, the Youth Council held a bake sale fundraiser outside of ACE Hardware benefiting the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Thanks to all of the lovely people who stopped by, we were able to donate \$190.25 to benefit a cause important to young people. Mental health conditions are especially common among teenagers and young adults, so the work that NAMI does to destigmatize mental health issues and help people find access to help and mental health support has a great positive impact on young people. The Youth Council is incredibly grateful to everyone who stopped by to buy the baked goods, and especially thankful to all that made donations. We hope to continue to hold events like this one in the future that will support other groups dedicated to helping young people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Council Applications:

Calling all Takoma Park youth in grades 7-12! Applications for the 2018-2019 Youth Council are now open! If you're interested in helping your community, taking an active role in city government, and representing youth interests, fill out an application [here](#). The deadline to apply is **September 30, 2018**. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us!

Youth Town Hall:

The Takoma Park Youth City Council is proud to announce our first Youth Town Hall being held on October 14, 2018 from 2:00 - 5:00 pm at the Takoma Park Community Center. This will be an important opportunity for the youth in Takoma Park to talk to leaders in our community about issues that are important to them. The forum will be designed to have both small group conversations and a larger discussion. Our leaders include members of our city government, activists in our community, and elected officials who represent us in office. Please join us! We are planning for a fun and meaningful day with pizza at the end of it! Register for the event [here](#), or contact us for more information!

DC Teens Action Calls and Cupcakes:

DC Teens Action, a social action and civic engagement group for teens in the DC area, is hosting their first event of the year called Calls and Cupcakes. Teens will be learning about different candidates in swing states, learning how to phonebank, and then phonebanking for candidates that they choose, all while eating cupcakes! It will be this Friday, September 21st, from 4:00 - 6:00 pm at 122 Maryland Avenue NE Washington, DC 20002. For more information, please email dcteensaction@gmail.com.

CONTACT US

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Twitter: @YouthTakoma

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