

1 Spring  
2013



# TOWN TALK

# COUNCILWOMAN SUSAN A. BERLAND

The Youth Council is comprised of students from each of the nine public high schools in the Town of Huntington. They meet twice a month to discuss issues that affect the youth of our community and to plan events that engage their peers in local issues. Through their various events, the Youth Council has raised thousands of dollars for local charities in the Town of Huntington.

I am proud that the Huntington Youth Council, established in 2003, is currently wrapping up its ninth year in operation. The Huntington Youth Council is an excellent opportunity for students to make an impact in the Town and engage in local community service, not to mention a great way to make friends in other school districts.

Joining the Youth Council gives students the opportunity to hold leadership positions, learn first-hand the ins and outs of local government and get involved in issues that matter to them and affect their community.



A NOTE FROM THE  
PUBLICATIONS DEPUTY





## WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING SUPERVISOR?

Being one of the supervisors of the Huntington Youth Council is a very demanding job. At each meeting, there are so many things we have to accomplish such as the planning of the Youth Forum and the Battle of the Bands. Part of the job of supervisor is to ensure that all meetings run smoothly and that each member has an equal opportunity to express their opinions about our events as well as share their ideas on ways to improve the Council.

But there is still more to being supervisor than just leading meetings. Often times it may feel as though the supervisor has the entire Youth Council on his/her shoulders. The supervisor is the connection between all the

members and the Executive Board. The Youth Council doesn't function well unless all of the deputy supervisors do their various jobs, communicate and cooperate with the other members of the Executive Board. As co-supervisor, I must ensure that the Youth Council functions as a cohesive unit when trying to achieve the goal of raising awareness on local issues and work hard alongside the Executive Board to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

**GRANT BERLAND, HILLS EAST**  
CO-SUPERVISOR

The Huntington Youth Council offers students in grades 9-12 who are exemplary leaders and determined students the opportunity to be the voice for the youth of the Town of Huntington. The Youth Council places addressing issues currently facing the student population among its highest priorities, demonstrated by its hosting of the biannual Youth Forums. These Youth Forums invite open discussion of topics that affect both the Huntington community and the world today. The students of the Town are invited to share their views and thoughts in efforts to make a difference.

The articles on the following pages, written by the members of the Huntington Youth Council, offer a bit more detail about the Youth Council's involvement in its community and offers insight to each member's personal experiences as part of such an inspiring Youth Council.

**ANNIE NIKUNEN, NORTHPORT**  
DEPUTY SUPERVISOR OF PUBLICATIONS

# WHY THE HYC?

During my sophomore year, I was one of the millions of young high school students looking to increase my community involvement so that I would feel prepared for college. As a result, I looked to Councilwoman Susan A. Berland's Huntington Youth Council. The Youth Council's goals and aspirations meshed well with my own goals and aspirations for an extracurricular: to make a difference in the community, create a bond between the youth in neighboring school districts and to attend meetings that follow organized procedures and allow attendees to plan events. But I was not very involved during my first year on the Council.

I rarely spoke and seldom offered to make presentations on issues that confront the Town's youth. But as the school year progressed, I began to share more, write summaries about issues and even forged friendships with other members of the Council. I learned about issues facing our community, our state and even our country. The Huntington Youth Council was instrumental in helping me develop skills such as public speaking, how to successfully run meetings and a stronger sense of leadership. I constantly use the skills needed for the Council in other aspects of my life. I am more willing to speak in front of others and meet new people without the slightest worry of any judgments.

To top it all off, the Youth Council helped me build an impressive resume. Today I serve as one of the Co-Supervisors of the Council. I know every member on the Council and have cultivated more new friendships. I even regained the friendships of those that I knew when I was younger but had not seen in a long time because they go to another school. I sincerely hope that other youth looking to better themselves and their community become members of the Council and have just as incredible of an experience as I have.

**JESSE FELDMAN-STEIN**  
**HUNTINGTON**  
CO-SUPERVISOR



## TACKLING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Twice a year the Huntington Youth Council hosts a Youth Forum designed to get the community's youth talking about issues that concern them. What makes this event so special is that it is planned and run by high school students from the Town of Huntington.

Members of the Youth Council invite their peers to come and testify their opinions and share their ideas on pre-selected topics, compiled by the Youth Council.

The first Youth Forum of the school year was held in January to discuss three topics controversial to the youth in our community: legalization of marijuana, sex education in the public school curriculum and lowering the drinking age. Many students were quick to share their ideas; some even returned multiple times to expand and amend their original testimonies. With the second Youth Forum approaching, the Youth Council is expecting another great event.

**RACHEL ANSZELOWICZ, HHH EAST**  
DEPUTY SUPERVISOR OF EVENTS

## FULFILLING MY

In 2011, I attended the fall Youth Forum, hosted by the Huntington Youth Council, at the encouragement of my AP European History teacher. At the Youth Forum, we broke into groups, led by Council members, to discuss issues pertinent to the youth of the community. We were then given the opportunity to approach the podium and speak to the Huntington Youth Council Executive Board about our opinions on these issues, an event later televised on the Town channel. There are very few opportunities that students have to fully share their concerns and



## SHOWCASING THE YOUTH'S VOICE

The Huntington Youth Council's biannual Youth Forums are wonderful opportunities for high school students to voice their opinion, speak their mind and debate topics that are currently affecting their community.

I find the Youth Forums exciting because I get to hear different opinions on topics that I wouldn't normally hear discussed anywhere else. The Youth Forums make attendees think deeper about the many different approaches to a situation.

As a result of my participation in the Youth Forums, I now want to understand an issue fully before I come to an

immediate conclusion and open my mouth.

I think everyone should participate in one of the Huntington Youth Council's Youth Forums to broaden his or her opinions on real life issues and to be inspired to improve our community.

**DYLAN WADLER, HARBORFIELDS**  
DEPUTY SUPERVISOR

## CIVIC DUTY

the Youth Council not only provides this opportunity, but also educates students about key issues.

The Huntington Youth Council sponsors two of these forums a year, in addition to many other events. At the spring Youth Forum, we discussed topics such as the industrialization of Huntington and the effects of the Connecticut shootings on our schools' securities. These are just a few examples of the many pressing topics that students have the opportunity to discuss and debate.

I joined the Council immediately following the 2011 fall Youth Forum and I am still thankful for my teacher's encouragement. Having your concerns heard and learning about issues in your community is a key part of a democracy. By being a dedicated member of the Youth Council, I feel that I am fulfilling my duty as an American and as a member of the Huntington community.

**CARA JACOBSON, HHH EAST**

# COME TOGETHER, MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The first time I heard about the Huntington Youth Council was at my high school's freshman orientation. As a member of the Honor Society, I attended the orientation to guide incoming freshmen on tours through campus. When Councilwoman Susan A. Berland described the purpose of the Huntington Youth Council, I found it intriguing how students from different schools were able to come together to make a difference in our community.

After the orientation I submitted an application to the Huntington Youth Council and was accepted. Since then, I participated in numerous events that gave me the opportunity to make a difference in

our community. One of my favorites is the Youth Forum, a gathering of Huntington's high school students at Town Hall to talk about various issues selected by the Youth Council due to their timeliness and impact on the youth in our community. I think that it is great for youth to voice their opinions on issues that affect teens. The Huntington Youth Council makes a difference in our Town and I recommend that anyone who is interested in helping our community gets involved!

**BIANCA MIELKE, NORTHPORT**  
TOWN CLERK

## BUILDING RESPONSIBLE LEADERS

The Huntington Youth Council is your chance to make a difference and have a voice! For nine years, the Huntington Youth Council has brought students from each of our town's high schools together to meet and discuss issues in our community. Under Councilwoman Susan A. Berland's guidance, Council members have put together events such as the Skate Swap, Old Burial Ground Cleanup, Science Forum and the upcoming Battle of the Bands. At the past Youth Forums, the Youth Council facilitated discussions on the legalization of marijuana, school safety, the legal drinking age and sustainability/alternative energy.

Joining the Youth Council bestows a sense of responsibility, usefulness and leadership within its members. The Council meets once or twice a month to discuss matters within our neighborhoods and to plan events that help the community and raise money for charity. The Youth Council not only grants one a sensation of obligation and affords the opportunity to help our schools, community and charities, but it is also an impressive extra-curricular activity for college resumes. Join the Huntington Youth Council today and be the change your community and school needs!

**GIANNA BARBERIA, HHH WEST**

UNIFYING  
HUNTINGTON





## ENCOURAGING A SPIRIT OF ACTIVISM

The Huntington Youth Council is comprised of students who are dedicated to charitable deeds, uniting the community and educating their peers on the roles and responsibilities of local government. Members of the Youth Council come from every public high school in the Town of Huntington to meet every other week in Town Hall to discuss community issues and plan events. Such events include the annual Youth Forums, Skate Swaps, Science Forum, Town Throw-Down and Battle of the Bands.

Being a member of the Youth Council brought me closer to my community and taught me the dynamics of local government. The Council also encouraged

the activist in me whether as a result of listening to presentations by the League of Women Voters or by my fellow classmates voicing their opinions at the Youth Forums on controversial issues such as the drinking age and the legalization of marijuana. Because the Youth Council is comprised of members from every public high school in the Town, I have met very interesting students who I have learned a lot from, regardless of whether or not we share the same opinions.

**NATALIE HAEBICH, HHH EAST**

The Huntington Youth Council is an excellent program run by Councilwoman Susan A. Berland. The Youth Council was set up to bring together students from all of the public schools in Huntington to discuss the issues in our Town from the youth's perspective. The Council hosts two Youth Forums a year and invites students to express their views on select topics. The Council is also involved in keeping our community clean and participates in many of the "Keep Huntington Beautiful"

cleanups. Besides all of the "business stuff," the Council also has fun every once in a while; the Council brings Huntington's youth together to meet new people while having fun and bettering their community either by hosting the Town Throwdown or a Battle of the Bands.

**PHILIP GIAMBERTONE, COLD SPRING HARBOR**  
DEPUTY SUPERVISOR OF MEMBERSHIP

# AS A SENIOR...

I didn't originally intend to join the Huntington Youth Council; in fact, it was the furthest thing from my mind when I started my senior year in high school. The previous spring I had (unsuccessfully) campaigned for a position in my school's student government and I wasn't really keen on trying out any more endeavors in youth government.

However, one of my teachers approached me after class one day and handed me an application and told me that he thought that I would enjoy it. I begrudgingly filled out the lines, typed up a few quick words, and sent it in without expecting it to lead to anything. A few weeks later, I was surprised to get a letter from Councilwoman Berland that welcomed me to the Council and I decided to participate to see what I would end up doing.

The next few weeks of meetings were refreshing to me - the Council reminded me of my leadership class in high school from the year before and I enjoyed the familiar feeling of brainstorming solutions to various problems. The other teens in the Council seemed to be a lot like me: willing to put their ideas out into the open and work with other people to come to some sort of agreement. A small sort of subculture seemed to exist during our meetings at Town Hall - for example: there is now a standard practice of racing up the stairs to meetings instead of taking the *slowest* elevator that I have ever been on, which leaves you waiting two minutes for the doors to open.

The Youth Council is a wonderful organization for any teen who wants to be involved not only with their peers from their own school, but also with students from high schools around Huntington in various events for charity fundraising and community improvement. I sincerely hope that you consider the Youth Council as an extracurricular activity for your next year in school.

**TRISTAN HYNES, HARBORFIELDS**  
DEPUTY TOWN CLERK



## AN EXCELLENT EXPERIENCE

The Huntington Youth Council is an outstanding program which provides great opportunities for high school students to get involved in the community. When I was first introduced to the program, I instantly knew that it would be a great way for me to voice my opinions on local issues that are important to me.

Between school and extracurricular activities, I worried it would be difficult to fit another activity into my schedule, but the Youth Council conveniently meets twice a month. The Huntington Youth Council hosts many exciting events, such as the Youth Forum, Skate Swap and a Battle of the Bands.

Being a member of the Huntington Youth Council has been an excellent experience and I am looking forward to seeing many new faces next year!

**BAILEY KASTON,**  
HHH EAST

I joined the Youth Council at the recommendation of a good friend. I didn't know what to expect at first but soon realized it was a town government for youth. It is an experience like no other, especially if you are interested in politics.

We host two Youth Forums per year, a very unique event in which high school students debate local topics such as the environment, a proposed park on Old Country Road and even the possibility of wind turbines at the new Canon headquarters in Melville.

As a Council, we participate in local cleanups at the Old Burial Ground and the Town's beaches. As a member, I have made many new friends and have come to love being a part of our Town's youth government. If you are interested in politics, or have strong opinions about Town government and local issues, the Huntington Youth Council is perfect for you.

**BEN LIPPMAN,**  
HHH EAST

## HYC + SCIENCE

It was about 4:00 p.m. on one of the most beautiful days of the summer. As I stood on the platform at the Stony Brook train station, I had a moment of realization: my time working at Dr. Sitharaman's lab had come to an end. I thought back to the beginning of my involvement with the program. It all started with my application followed by an interview I was quite nervous about. I didn't know what to expect! But once the interview began, I realized that all the people that worked for the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition (HBCAC) were just as dedicated to educating their communities and changing policies as I have come to be. I knew they wanted someone who would be dedicated, committed and reliable throughout the duration of



## VOLUNTEERING AT UNIQUE EVENTS

Participating in sports can get very expensive and purchasing new gear every season, maybe a few times during the season, adds up. Councilwoman Susan A. Berland came up with the idea for the Huntington Youth Council to host the Skate Swap. This year alone, the Youth Council hosted two Skate Swaps, one in October and another in March.

While working at this event, I was helping a mom of two ice-hockey players who was overjoyed at trading in her sons' quality but ill-fitting hockey gear for gear her sons could

fit and use. As we looked through the selection of skates, she told me how this Skate Swap saved her a lot of money and how it is a great event for the community. Her satisfaction made volunteering at the Skate Swap even better. I love the Huntington Youth Council because it gives me the opportunity to help my community and it makes me proud to see the direct effects of our events.

**SARAH HAIKEN, HHH EAST**

## RESEARCH

the Students and Scientists Environmental Research Scholarship program.

In what seemed like moments later, I began working with the MRC-5 cell line (lung cells) after my mentor taught me how to culture them. I tested the effect of graphene nanoplatelets on the cells, a process that took about two months and eventually gathered enough data to determine the level of concentration that would be toxic to the cells. I immediately wanted to present my research to share the knowledge I acquired with my community.

This is the reason I joined Youth Council, to share my ideas with my community. I was led to the Council by

the HBCAC because of Councilwoman Berland's support of the program. Through their collaboration and the planning of the Huntington Youth Council, I presented my research to the Town during the Youth Council's Science Forum. This was one of my favorite experiences to date.

I am glad that I found the Youth Council because it gave me the opportunity to voice my opinion about science research as well as events and issues that affect my community. Thanks to the Youth Council and the HBCAC, this year has truly been filled of memorable experiences that I would not trade for the world.

**VICTOR TELLEZ, WHITMAN**



## A MULTIFACETED ORGANIZATION

If you like to be involved in your community and aspire to make changes to better it, you should consider joining the Huntington Youth Council. The Council was created by Councilwoman Susan A. Berland to give students the opportunity to discuss various issues in their community and to make changes when possible. Students from all of Huntington's public high schools meet every other week to discuss various agenda items throughout the course of the evening, such as the Youth Council's many events.

One of the Huntington Youth Council's most popular events is the Youth Forum, which gives high school students the opportunity to share their opinion on various issues. The topics for

the Youth Forum are chosen by the Youth Council based on what they feel are the most important issues currently facing the community.

Another forum hosted by the Youth Council is the Science Forum, which gives students who participated in the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition's Students and Scientists Environmental Research Scholarship Program a chance to present research they conducted to the whole community. This forum affords attendees the opportunity to learn about various experiments and their possible applications in the future. Another popular event hosted by the Youth Council is the Skate Swap. The Skate Swap allows Huntington's ice-skaters

and hockey players to purchase or swap figure skating and hockey equipment donated by themselves and fellow community members.

The Huntington Youth Council is a perfect opportunity for students to voice their opinion on issues in their Town, to experience the ins and outs of local government and to plan events that engage their peers and their community.

**ANTHONY PUCA,  
HUNTINGTON**



## NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

**BATTLE OF THE BANDS: SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2013 | HECKSCHER PARK**

**FEATURING:** 10 bands and singers from the high schools in the Town of Huntington each playing their best two songs.

**PRIZES:** \$75, \$50 and \$25 gift cards to Murphy's Music. Opportunity to open for one of the nationally touring acts on The Paramount stage as a support band.

**GUEST PERFORMANCE:** NICK TANGORRA BAND

I attended my first Huntington Youth Council Youth Forum in the beginning of ninth grade. My social studies teacher encouraged my class to attend and state our opinions on the three topics that were going to be discussed. Because of this incentive, I decided to go to the forum. There were many students from my school as well as other schools in the Town of Huntington. After the forum, I was very interested in joining the Council and approached my friends on the board for their advice.

Councilwoman Berland gladly accepted me after reviewing my application. To this day, it is has been the most rewarding decision I have ever made. Being in the Huntington Youth Council widened my view of my community. I learned so much about caring for Huntington and about sharing

ideas of enhancing the quality of the Town. I realize how paramount it is for the upcoming generations to help and contribute to the prosperity of our Town.

During Huntington Youth Council meetings - held every two weeks at Town Hall - we discuss ideas for new events and choose charities to donate our proceeds to. These meetings are a great way to get a response from the youth of Huntington as they allow input on ongoing ideas and proposals. I think this Council will continue to unite the community because it calls attention to the youth's collective voice. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful Youth Council and in turn, the growth of Huntington.

**HELEN KIM, HHH EAST**





## INVESTING IN HUNTINGTON'S FUTURE

Attending the Huntington Youth Council's Science Forum, hosted in partnership with the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition (HBCAC), to hear presentations made by young scientists on the experiments they conducted was a great experience.

Due to their affiliation with the HBCAC Students and Scientists Environmental Research Scholarship Program, each of the student-scientists presented a wide array of cancer-related experiments that they worked on for months in professional laboratories. I found each student to be remarkably knowledgeable in their particular field of study and their hard work, dedication and passion clearly showed.

The Huntington Youth Council's Science Forum highlighted this emerging group of dedicated young adults who care about the future and want to take an active role in making it a better place. Despite the fact that it is said that America is falling behind when it comes to education, this event showed that America can keep its competitive edge and remain a global superpower and model for the world because we have a strong and growing group of young adults who are already invested in our community's future.

**JONATHAN MOZOON, WHITMAN**

## CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY



If you are high school student within the Town of Huntington and are interested in the Huntington Youth Council, please contact:

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