



Youth Leaders Improve Bound Brook Street Safety

A group of teen leaders, called Middle Earth / 4-H Student Ambassadors for Community Health, spent their summer improving street safety in their community of Bound Brook. For the past school year, these youth have collaborated with government and community leaders to identify and determine viable options for solving the health needs of Bound Brook.

The youth were selected for this initiative through a grant from New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI), which seeks to empower young people to learn about issues that affect their community and to utilize tools and support systems already in place to make a difference. Somerset County 4-H, a youth development organization, and Middle Earth partnered to advise and coach these youth.



By brainstorming ideas, reviewing a community health survey, and hearing from local experts, the Student Ambassadors decided to focus on street safety in Bound Brook. They felt that street safety affects both the physical and mental health of a large part of the community's population.

The Student Ambassadors developed a three-prong approach to improve street safety, which they implemented during the month of July:

1 Parklet
 The youth leaders built a parklet, which is a small, temporary structure that acts as an attractive sidewalk extension, providing more space and amenities for the public. The parklet can be quickly assembled and disassembled for transport and is roughly the size of a parking space. The teens assembled the parklet at many community events in July, offering Bound Brook residents an attractive place to stop, to sit, and to rest while taking in the activities of the street.



2 Murals
 The youth leaders, with guidance from a local artist, painted beautiful street murals around Bound Brook. The teens outlined a design and then invited the community to help paint the mural in a method similar to a "paint by numbers" approach. The murals are located at Codrington Park, Smalley Elementary School, LaMonte Elementary School; and VanHorn Plaza Downtown.



3 Crosswalks
 The teen leaders also worked with the local government to improve crosswalks in town. The youth collected data about jaywalking, distracted driving, vehicles yielding to pedestrians, and cyclists and shared the information with local government officials. They obtained approval to implement high visibility crosswalk improvements within town.



Middle Earth is currently seeking the next group of Student Ambassadors for the 2018-19 school year. Interested high school students, please contact: Hailey at hthompson@middleearthnj.org or 908-725-7223.

NJHI is the statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. To meet the many health needs of our state's diverse population, the NJHI program encourages collaboration to foster deep relationships committed to long-term change allowing all to live the healthiest life possible. To learn more about NJHI: Next Generation Community Leaders initiative, visit njhi.org and or hashtag #NJLeaders2030.

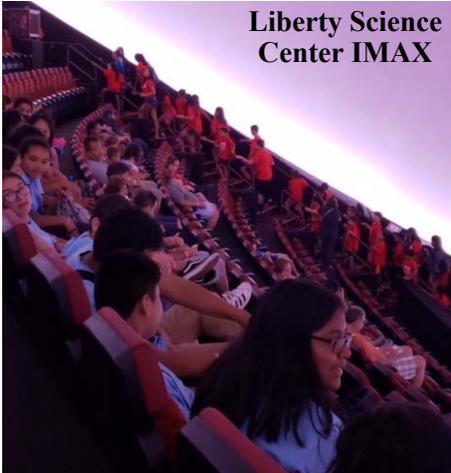


Summer a BIG Success for our Afterschool Programs!

Our summer afterschool program expanded this year to offer full day (instead of only half day) programming! In addition, the youth went on some amazing field trips (photos below).



U.S.S. New Jersey



Liberty Science Center IMAX



Hiking



Aquarium

Thank You!!!

Thank you to these organizations for their recent donations:



- ◆ Affinity Federal Credit Union
- ◆ Dombal-Vogel Foundation
- ◆ Children's Hope Initiative
- ◆ New Jersey City University
- ◆ Union Village

Thank you to everyone who visited our food stand at the Somerset County 4-H Fair!



You are invited to...

ART WITH A HEART

...an evening to paint, shop, and support



MIDDLE EARTH

Friday, November 16, 2018 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Somerville Elks Lodge
 375 Union Avenue, Bridgewater, NJ 08807
 Tickets are \$75. Seating is limited!
 Purchase tickets at www.MiddleEarthNJ.org

- ◆ Paint your own illuminated wine bottle.
- ◆ Enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.
- ◆ Enter to win amazing prizes in our Basket Raffle.
- ◆ Shop at the booths of various vendors.

We are **seeking vendors and basket donations** for our Art with Heart event. If you want to learn more about these opportunities, please contact our office at 908-725-7223 or office@middleearthnj.org.

P.O. Box 8045
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

