

Tompkins County Youth Services Department

Quarter 1 Newsletter, March 2018

Message from the TCYSD Director

"The only thing constant in life is change". This famous line was first published in the 16th century by François de la Rochefoucauld, but can be applied just as well today. Change may be a constant in life but that doesn't mean that changes are always easy.



As you scroll through our Spring Newsletter you will find there are a lot of changes happening within the Tompkins County Youth Services Department. Long tenured staff members are leaving and new opportunities are being created. Using the solid foundation crafted by the employees that came before us these changes can be marked by new opportunities to build further and increase our services to those who support young people. Key to this is keeping our mission in mind – investing time, resources, and funding in

communities to enable all youth to thrive in school, work, and life.

Yes, there will be changes within the Youth Services Department. And we will continue to be a foundational resource for those youth and families who work, play, and live in Tompkins County.

-Amie Hendrix



The Youth Services Department has two openings. As Amie's message indicated we are experiencing changes within our department and currently have two vacancies for the Deputy Director of Youth Services and a Coordinator of Community Youth Services. To find more information about these two positions please visit the [Tompkins County Human Resources page](#).

2017 Municipal Youth Services System is a Success

1,759 youth were served in local youth development programs and 203 youth were employed. The success of these programs is attributed to a terrific partnership between local youth commissions/community councils, the Tompkins County Youth Services staff who provide technical assistance, and municipal and county financial support. Here are some highlights contributed by program educators.

- **Groton:** I worked with a middle school boy who didn't want to attend summer school. Through negotiations with the school, the mom, and the student a plan was worked out to have him attend summer school in the morning and be a junior camp counselor for the camp in the afternoon. At the end of the summer he was one of the top two junior counselors and will be asked back next year. This boy is doing well this school year keeping his grades up so he can be a full time junior counselor in 2018.
- **Dryden:** I was able to set up a very positive mentoring relationship for a girl who stood out as a gifted naturalist. This girl

got her New York State Falconry license and is working with a young red tail hawk.

- **Enfield:** A fifth grade boy was struggling with a move from the Bronx to a very rural community. On top of that his family was facing many struggles, his father was incarcerated, and his mother had no car and no job. This boy was encouraged to join programs, it was difficult at first but as time went on he made friends. Now he enthusiastically participates in programs, has friends and has been invited to sit at lunch with them and has been invited to family outings and birthday parties.
- **Trumansburg/Ulysses:** Through the YEP (youth employment program) a girl with learning disabilities got a job with the Children's Garden in Ithaca. She found out she likes to work with young kids and had a talent for it. She now has a full time job at a local child care center and is happy and confident.
- **Danby:** A boy who moved from Florida and was sitting alone in the cafeteria every day was encouraged to participate in programs. As he continued in programs his confidence grew and he began to make friends. He has already signed up for programs in 2018.





Happy Retirement Kris!

Kris Bennett will be retiring in May 2018 after 17 successful years as the Planner of the Youth Services Dept. Prior to coming to TCYS Kris worked for the Child Development Council for 15 years helping day care providers get licensed through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services among other things.

At Youth Services Kris was the lead in several important projects during her tenure including a social norms campaign in Dewitt and Trumansburg middle schools and was selected to present at the national social norms conference about the success of the programs. She helped to usher the student survey from 2005 to present, her roles included negotiations with school districts, chief data person, presenting data throughout the County, and creating the summary of highlights. Kris also managed the collection and presentation of information for the OJ Guide to services for youth. As the Planner she also wrote the comprehensive plan for the State and maintained mountains of data the many agencies and municipalities use.

Kris is looking forward to sleeping in, spending more time with her 4 grandkids, and exercising. She is planning on traveling especially to national parks and hopes to experience what living abroad is like. We will all miss Kris's attention to detail, her ability to mine data, and her editing skill extraordinaire.

Opportunities for Involvement

Do you support the mission of investing time, resources and funding in communities to enable all youth to thrive in school, work and life? Are you willing to commit to providing your thoughts, insights, and time to help advise the Youth Services Department? If you answered yes to these questions perhaps membership on either a local youth commission or the TCYSD Youth Board is the right fit for you!

Current vacancies include:

- Tompkins County Youth Services Board is in need of representatives from Caroline, City of Ithaca, Danby, Groton, Town of Ithaca, and Newfield. Youth Board members must be 16 or older and committed to advocating on behalf of the youth in Tompkins County.
- The Joint Youth Commission has vacancies for one commission member from Town of Caroline, one from Town of Ithaca, and one from Village of Lansing. Young people 16 or older are encouraged to join.
- The Trumansburg/Ulysses Youth Commission has one vacancy for a Town of Ulysses member, they meet the first Tuesday of each month except July & August.

For more information on ways you can get involved please contact Amie Hendrix at ahendrix@tom-pkins-co.org.

Good Luck Dave!



Congratulations to David Sanders on a new position! On March 12th David Sanders will be transitioning to a new role in the county as the Criminal Justice Coordinator. He has been a valued member of the Youth Services Department since 2011. During his time at Youth Services he was the lead on the performance measure initiative in Tompkins County, a role he will be continuing to fulfill in his new position. Dave has worked with our contract agencies and municipalities monitoring programs and supporting targeted youth enterprises since he arrived. As a valued member of the team Dave was immersed in the Enough Abuse initiative served on various committees in a youth advisement capacity.

Dave has “learned a lot” from the people he has worked with. He is thankful for the support of an extraordinary board. Dave has thoroughly enjoyed working with all the municipalities and agencies he was fortunate to interact with. He feels honored to work with so many people that “care deeply about youth”.

Dave will not be going far but his presence and dedication to youth will be missed in the office. We wish him happiness and success in his new position.

Youth Worker Training Series

To date we've offered:

January: What Does Class Got to Do With It – Part I, Anne Rhodes

February: Mandated Reporter, Kristi Taylor, Advocacy Center & Erin McKenna, Dept of Social Services

SAVE THE DATE – more details to come

We are organizing and finalizing the following offerings for the rest of the year

March 29: Identifying & Supporting Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Trafficking, Part II.

Needed to attend Part I to be invited to attend Part II



April 19: What Does Class Got to Do With It – Part II

April 25: Summer Camp Scholarship Guidelines, Dept of Social Services & Child Development Council

May: Financial Presentations - Helping Teens with the Basics (train the trainers)

June 28: Adventure Based Learning

July: Screening and panel discussion of the documentary SCREENAGERS

September: Poverty Simulation

October: Project Look Sharp

November: Trauma Informed Care

Be sure to check our [web page](#) regularly for more details on upcoming trainings planned!

Data Information

How many students in Tompkins County participate in the free or reduced price school lunch program?

What is the youth poverty rate in Tompkins County?

Are our teen pregnancy rates better or worse than in surrounding counties?

Which Tompkins town has the most youth under age 18?

Are youth alcohol use rates trending up or down?



If you have ever needed information of this sort, either for grant writing or program planning, Tompkins County Youth Services Department can help. We compile regularly updated youth data from a variety of sources to help our local Tompkins County programs, elected officials, and community members better understand and plan services for local youth. Data can be accessed at <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/youth/YouthData>

A recent survey of programs funded by County Youth Services showed that 80% are aware of our data resources and 75%

had accessed one or more during the previous year. 100% who had accessed data found the information useful.

Answers to the above:

Free lunch participation - 35%, reduced price lunch participation – 5% (2017)

16.8% of youth under 18 are at or below the poverty level (2015).

In 2015 there were 11 pregnancies for teens under age 17 and 51 for those 18-19. Our rates are among the lowest in the state.

Town of Dryden, with 3,270 youth under 18. Town of Ithaca is second, with 2,817 (2016).

Local youth alcohol rates are trending down, 13.7% reported use in the past 30 days in 2016, down significantly from 22.8% in 2010.

Recent Articles that Caught our Eye

[Teen vaping trend – what parents need to know](#)

[Do's and Don'ts for Parents to Help Teens Build Math Interest and Success](#)

[Getting Teens Involved in Extracurricular Activities Can Improve Their Self-Esteem](#)

Camp Guide

Watch out for the camp guide to hit the newsstands March 28th! The guide will be a pull-out section of the *Ithaca Time*.

Farewell Cheyenne!



Tompkins County native Cheyenne Gorton began work with TCYSD in May 2017 as our Project Assistant. During her time with our department she worked as the lead on the 40 Caring Adults Campaign, organized our 40th Anniversary celebration, did outreach, created and published several newsletters, took the lead on the office's social media, then had the task of "teaching" some of us "old dogs" how to continue with social media once she's gone and lastly she organized and coordinated our department's first Pitch Contest.

Cheyenne plans to graduate in May 2018 with her master's degree in student affairs administration from Binghamton University. She will then begin her career combining her education, experience and passions for event planning and leadership development in higher education.

We learned a lot about and from Cheyenne. There is no bigger fan or faithful customer to Taco Bell, we learned Taco Bell will cater weddings, Funyuns (onion flavored rings) are indeed considered a vegetable, Chocolate milk shakes are acceptable for breakfast, and just say "no" to anything green and leafy.

We will dearly miss Cheyenne and wish her much luck, success, and happiness in all her future endeavors.

Pitch Contest



The Tompkins County Youth Services Department hosted its first ever Achieving Youth Results Pitch Contest. This was an opportunity for Tompkins County non-profits to compete for funding "Shark Tank" style.

Those competing were matched with community coaches, leaders in the

community that could support and help prepare the non-profits presenting.

To read more about the Pitch Contest, visit <http://tompkinsweekly.com/news/2018/02/19/almost-pitch-perfect/> for the featured article in Tompkins Weekly by Jamie Swinnerton.

Pitch Contest Results

- Ithaca Underground: \$5,000
- Greater Ithaca Activities Center: \$4,000
- Just Play Project: \$3,600
- Youth Farm: \$1,500
- Weave: \$1,600
- Enfield Community Council: \$1,200
- Alcohol & Drug Council: \$1,200
- YMCA: \$1,900