

TO: PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: AMAL AZIZ, RECREATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

DATE: MAY 31, 2016

SUBJECT: TEEN PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

No action to be taken.

BACKGROUND

The City of Palo Alto (City) recognizes the importance of creating a positive, safe environment where teens can develop life skills and grow as individuals. The Community Services Department offers several programs and leadership groups geared specifically for the Palo Alto teen community with the goal of developing leaders and fostering growth. Each teen program offered by the City focuses on developing the spirit, mind and body; stimulating creativity, offering challenges, and building developmental assets.

DISCUSSION

The City's teen programs include teen leadership opportunities, afterschool programming, and teen initiative grants. Summer camps are also available for teens to participate recreationally or through the counselor-in-training program, which provides leadership skills.

Teen Leadership

Representing the City of Palo Alto, Teen Leadership brings the teen voice into various facets of the Palo Alto teen community.

Palo Alto Youth Council (PAYC)

PAYC works closely with City of Palo Alto's recreation department and reports yearly to the City Council to contribute information on issues related to Palo Alto youth. The council is made of approximately 20 teens from Palo Alto High School, Castilleja High School, and Gunn High School. The Council hosts an array of events, including regular teen forums, where teens from throughout the community are welcomed to voice their ideas, concerns, opinions, and possible solutions to issues facing the teen population.

Teen Advisory Board (TAB)

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is made up of Palo Alto High School students who want to plan and lead high school events for students in Palo Alto. Comprised of approximately 20 teens from Palo Alto High School, Castilleja High School, and Gunn High School, the Advisory hosts a number of recreational events, including movie nights, trivia nights, finals decompression cupcake decorating, and more.

Teen Arts Council (TAC)

The Teen Arts Council is a creative community of Palo Alto teens dedicated to enriching the lives of their peers through artistic expression. Towards this end, the TAC coordinates events and projects inspired by the passions of council members and connects teens with the financial and logistical resources to carry out their imaginative ideas. Comprised of approximately 50 teens from Palo Alto High School, Gunn High School, and Castilleja High School, the Teen Arts Council is best known for their highly successful open-mics and other creative productions.

Teen Library Advisory Board (T-LAB)

The Teen Library Advisory Board, or T-LAB, is an advisory of teens in grades 8-12 that coordinate events, activities, and efforts for teens that visit Palo Alto libraries. Comprised of approximately 15 teens from Palo Alto High School, Gunn High School, and Castilleja High School, Jordan Middle School, J.L. Stanford Middle School, and Terman Middle School; T-LAB hosts an array of fun events for teens, including an Anti-Valentine's Day Party, Teen Finals Cram Slam, and more.

Afterschool Programming

The Mitchell Park Teen Center provides both drop-in and structured free programming for middle school and high school teens in the community. Ensuring a fun, safe, and engaging space for youth afterschool both the Learning Enrichment After-School Program (LEAP) and The Drop programming is open to all teens that attend a Palo Alto middle school or high school.

Learning Enrichment After-School Program

LEAP (Learning Enrichment Afterschool Program) is an after-school program located in the Mitchell Park Community Center that provides services, activities, and classes to middle school students, grades 6-8 throughout the community. We provide homework help, various fun enrichment activities like sports, cooking, art, special events, and more. The program has approximately 90 enrolled students from schools throughout Palo Alto, with a daily attendance of approximately 35.

The Drop

The Drop at the Mitchell Park Teen Center is our drop-in space for high school teens. With extended hours on Friday evenings, Palo Alto high schoolers are able to participate in special teen events, as well as all of the recreational amenities the center yields, including pool, air hockey, video games, basketball, and board games, all in a fun, safe, and supervised space. Our teen membership has enrolled approximately 100 teens, with approximately 15 teens during regular afterschool hours, and approximately 30-40 teens for Friday Teen Night events.

Teen Initiative Grants – Bryant Street Garage Fund

The Bryant Street Garage Fund brings mentorship, support, resources, and funding to teen led ideas and initiatives. Teens bring their ideas and meet with the Teen Programs Specialist to further develop their idea into the form of a proposal. Proposals are reviewed by the Teen Services Committee, where they are then approved and moved forward into action. With support from teen services throughout the process, the Bryant Street Garage Fund supports teen ideas from beginning to end.

This year, the Bryant Street Garage Fund has supported an array of teen ideas, ranging from the highly successful teen documentary, 'Unmasked', to the creative collaboration of the Teen Arts Council. The Fund has put forth thousands of dollars towards more than 30 projects, reaching thousands of teens in the community.

Programs supported through the Bryant Street Garage Fund include:

Project Enybody
Teen Arts Council
Make X
Palo Alto Youth Council
Palo Alto Roots
Girl Up
Science for Sight
Gunn BEAM
Team 6036 Robotics Team
Financial Literacy for Youth (FLY)
Teen History Bowl
Teens Exploring Code
Science for Sight
Students United Against Cancer
DocX: Unmasked
Eyes: Teen Photography Exhibit and Fundraiser
ClickPA
Tall Tree Teens
Buddies 4 Math
Kick 4 Charity

Summer Opportunities

Teen Week Out Camp

Teen Week Out brings teens to weeks of exciting, and engaging trips activities throughout the summer. With trips to beaches, museums, theme parks, indoor rock climbing, and more, Teen Week Out works to help teens break away from their day-to-day routine.

Foothills Adventure Camp

Foothills Adventure brings traditional City of Palo Alto Foothills Camps to pre-teens and teens ages 11-13. Set in the beautiful Foothills Park, campers experience nature, learn basic outdoor skills, canoe, participate in overnights, and much more.

Counselor-in-Training Program

The City of Palo Alto Counselor-in-Training Program brings leadership into the camp experience. Counselors-in-Training are given opportunities to take on leadership roles in our Foothills Camps, where they work closely with youth and camp staff throughout the summer.