

2024

FREDERICK YOUTH COUNCIL

SPARKING CHANGE

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

YOUTH VOICE

In 2024, the FYC embraced the power of connection, stepping boldly into the community as active leaders.

LEADING THE WAY

The Journey

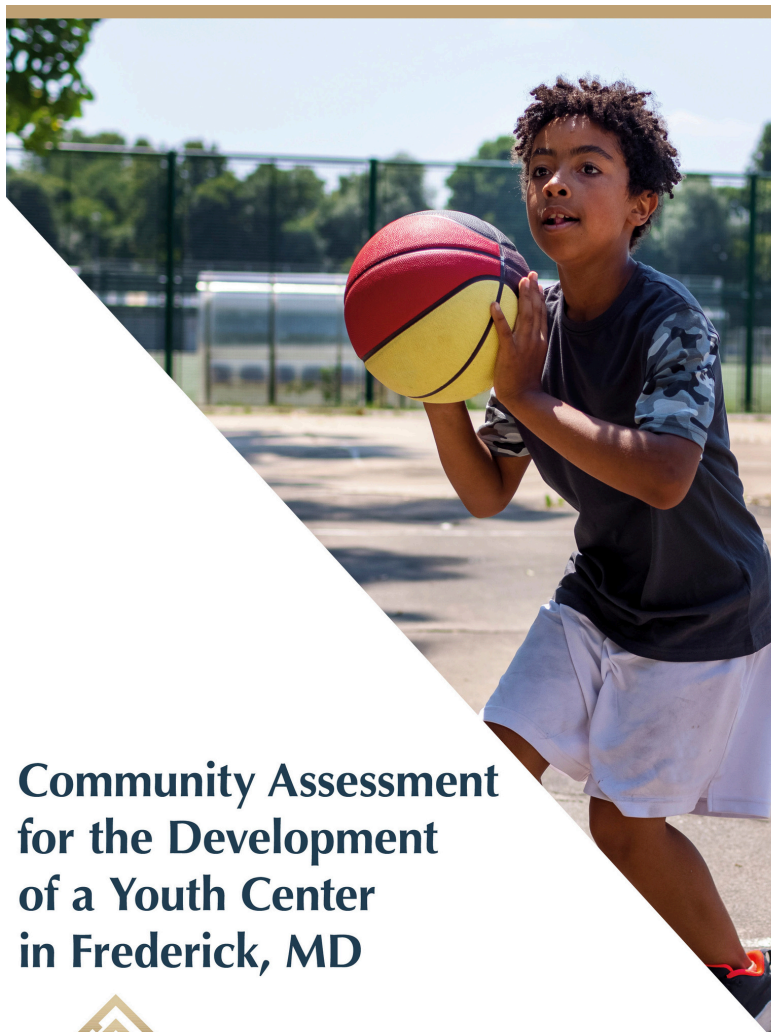
The journey began in 2022 with a community-wide assessment to explore how Frederick County could better support its young people. The assessment engaged youth, parents, educators, and community leaders to identify critical needs. It revealed three key outcomes: the need for a dedicated space for youth, a network to connect resources and reduce silos, and a platform to elevate youth voices in decision-making.

From this work, the Youth Council was created. It began in early 2024 with a clear goal: to ensure young people had a seat at the table and could influence the decisions that impact their lives. The Youth Council quickly became a driving force, providing leadership, insight, and energy to shape community initiatives.

The assessment findings also inspired the creation of the 12-to-24 Collaborative—a network designed to align efforts and connect services for young people. By working in partnership with the Youth Council, the Collaborative ensures that youth voices remain central to planning and action.

Another key result of the assessment was the vision for a youth center—a space where young people can gather, learn, and thrive. The Youth Council was instrumental in shaping the concept, ensuring it reflects the needs and aspirations of those it serves.

This journey continues to build momentum. The Youth Council, the Collaborative, and the Youth Center represent a shared commitment to creating a stronger, more connected community driven by the voices and leadership of its young people.



Community Assessment for the Development of a Youth Center in Frederick, MD





About the Youth Council

The Frederick Youth Council is a dynamic group of young leaders ages 12 to 24, dedicated to representing the diverse voices of youth in the community. They strive to ensure that the perspectives and concerns of young people are acknowledged and addressed by local government and nonprofit organizations.

The Youth Council is committed to fostering engagement, advocacy, and leadership among youth, empowering them to shape the future of Frederick. Through its initiatives, the Council creates a platform for young voices to be heard and influence positive change in our community. Together, its members are building a brighter future for all young people in Frederick!



MEET THE

Frederick Youth Council



Brooke Lieberman, Chair, age 18

I hope to create more leadership opportunities for students as well as expanding mental health resources for the youth of Frederick!



Thomas Evans, Vice Chair, age 17

I'm passionate about amplifying and empowering the voices of the Latino community and hope to represent these voices.



Carter Davis, Secretary, age 13

I aim to reach out to many different organizations to teach people about coding.



Kiya Marshall, Timekeeper age 20

What I aim to accomplish in the youth council is happiness for all youth in our county.



Anushka Tyagi, Member, age 17

I look forward to working with local groups and organizations on community-based projects aimed at improving the city of Frederick.



Alaina Bowie, Member, age 17

I hope to inspire other teens to get involved in a cause they care about.



Sydel Anku, Member, age 17

I want to empower the youth community through mindset transformation.



Jose Doradea, Member, age 17

As a member of our youth council, my aim is to inspire others to enhance their intellectual abilities.



Oluwanifise Otesile, Member, age 19

As a member of the Youth Council I hope to be of use to the youths and elders of the community.



Quinn Bannister, Member, age 17

I hope to use my seat on the youth council to raise awareness and support the mental health of my generation and advocate for LGBTQ+ acceptance and rights.



Rachel Spencer, Member, age 18

I am ready to inspire teens to volunteer in their community and find their service passions.



Hannah Meredith, Member, age 24

I am deeply passionate about service, particularly in the realm of youth development.



Breanna Brea Ochoa, Member, age 17

I aim to get more young adults interested in government, as they are the future of our country.



Judah Shaool, Member, age 13

I hope to increase awareness of all the different careers in Frederick, including letting kids explore starting their own businesses one day!



Muikiio Wafula, Member, age 14

I would like to help the youth in Frederick by informing them of the resources available to them in the county and helping them to find new hobbies to pursue.

MARCH
2024

First Inaugural Youth Council Meeting



Front Row left to right: Brooke Lieberman (Chair), Rachel Spencer, Jose Doradea, Judah Shaool, Oluwanifise Otesile, Breanna Brea Ochoa, Chantell Duckett (County Representative), Carter Davis, Sydel Anku, Paolo Bonarriva (Peacekeeper)

Back Row left to right: Anushka Tyagi, Alaina Bowie, Thomas Evans (Vice Chair), Mayor Michael O'Connor (The City of Frederick), Hannah Meredith, Kiya Marshall (Timekeeper), Quinn Bannister

As we look back on March 2024, we are proud to reflect on the First Inaugural Meeting of the Frederick Youth Council. This historic gathering marked a significant milestone for our members, as certificates were awarded by officials from both Frederick City and County, recognizing their dedication and hard work. The month was particularly special, as it set the stage for our Youth Council members to be invited to speak at various events hosted by local government bodies and nonprofit organizations. These opportunities have empowered members to champion youth issues and contribute meaningfully to community discussions. The enthusiasm and commitment displayed during this time have laid a strong foundation for the impactful work that lies ahead.



DC News Now attended the first Youth Council meeting and interviewed our Chair and Vice Chair. Check out the video by clicking the YouTube icon or scan the QR code.





2024 IMPACT



LOOKING BACK ON 2024

In an impressive display of commitment and leadership, the Frederick Youth Council has truly hit the ground running since its inception. Right from the start, council members have actively engaged in shaping their charter and defining the structure and vision of the council as a body of youth leaders. They have proudly participated in significant events, including speaking at the Mayor's "Month of the Young Child" campaign, where they championed youth issues and shared their insights on mental wellness. The council also had the opportunity to engage directly with Congressman David Trone, presenting him with a Youth Council T-shirt as a token of appreciation for his support of youth initiatives. One of their standout initiatives has been a visioning session for South End Park, where they contributed valuable input on the design of the future campus. Through these efforts, the Youth Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to community engagement, mental health awareness, and fostering a supportive environment for their peers, truly making a mark in their community.



Teen Wellness

Mental Health Matters

The Frederick Youth Council actively participated in the Teen Wellness Summit, a collaborative effort involving several organizations dedicated to promoting adolescent mental health. One of their key contributions was creating a public service announcement (PSA) on mental health, ensuring their voices were heard on this important issue. Council members proudly supported the event and gained valuable insights into community resources available in Frederick.

Driven by their passion for addressing mental health among youth, many council members are committed to bringing awareness to available resources and fostering a supportive environment for their peers. Their involvement at the summit underscores their dedication to making a positive impact on mental health issues affecting young people in the community.



Community Engagement



MAKING AN IMPACT

During the summer months, the Youth Council was actively involved in various initiatives aimed at better serving the youth in the community. They participated in the In the Streets event, engaging with community members and raising awareness about their initiatives. The council also delved into the Charter Review process, making important edits and finalizing it. In July, Delegate Karen Simpson from District 3 shared her story with the council.

Additionally, the Youth Council was invited to participate in a focus group organized by FCPS for Greenspace, a company developing an app to navigate mental and behavioral health services across the County. They led a community meeting with the Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP) to gain a better understanding of the needs among Frederick's youth. Their involvement in the Transformative Arts Project exhibit, "Voices of Resilience," further showcased their commitment to advocating for mental health awareness through diverse perspectives. Lastly, they were invited to participate in a grant review process with the Community Foundation of Frederick County, and provide their feedback on submitted grant applications.



LEARNING THROUGH LEADERSHIP

Monthly meetings are held at Y Arts in Frederick every third Tuesday, where Youth Council members gather to discuss their initiatives. During these meetings, they actively collaborate to ensure that every youth voice is heard throughout the decision-making process. Their commitment to inclusivity and engagement reflects their dedication to representing the needs and perspectives of the youth in their community.



Making History

In October, the Youth Council proudly participated in the signing ceremony for the new Youth Center at Scotty's Bus Lane. This significant event highlighted the achievements of the council and the collective efforts made to advocate for a dedicated space for youth in Frederick County. FYC's youngest member, 12-year-old Carter Davis, and our oldest member, 24-year-old Hannah Meredith, shared their perspectives on the importance of this initiative, emphasizing the vital role the Youth Council has played in shaping the future of youth services in our community.

Hannah and Carter extended heartfelt gratitude on behalf of Frederick Youth to Congressman David Trone for his generous funding and support of the Youth Center project. The ceremony was attended by notable community leaders, including County Executive Jessica Fitzwater, Mayor Michael O'Connor, Senator Karen Lewis Young, and other government officials, along with community members and organizers.



Construction is expected to be completed, with the building opening in early 2028, marking a monumental step forward for young people in Frederick County. The Youth Council has been instrumental in providing guidance and feedback on the needs of youth in the area. As we move forward, members will continue to participate in upcoming visioning sessions to ensure that the new center reflects the voices and needs of the youth it aims to serve. This collaboration will help create a vibrant space where young individuals can gather, learn, and thrive.



Team Frederick

Another great initiative was the Youth Council's participation in the Harlem Wizards vs. Team Frederick basketball game, which turned out to be an amazing community event.

Local leaders, including Mayor Michael O'Connor, were in attendance, and the Youth Council was thrilled to present him with their "Inspire, Change, and Lead with Passion" T-shirts.



The event successfully brought together the Frederick community as the Youth Council handed out information and engaged with attendees. Sponsored by the Ausherman Family Foundation, they distributed 100 T-shirts during halftime, promoting their first annual event and inviting community members to participate. During halftime, council members introduced themselves, interacted with the crowd, and handed out lanyards and T-shirts, enhancing visibility for youth leaders in the community.

Local Government



The Youth Council continues to make significant strides in engaging with various levels of local government. Recently, Vice Chair Thomas Evans and member Anushka Tyagi represented the Council at the quarterly county and city meeting in November. Their presentation highlighted the Youth Council's progress and outlined an exciting agenda focused on fostering leadership and service in our community.

Their impressive report resonated with local representatives, who expressed admiration for the Youth Council's leadership and ability to actively participate in discussions with government officials.



The support from fellow Youth Council members in attendance further underscored the collaborative spirit and commitment to supporting each other.

Youth Council remains committed to planting seeds of leadership and service, ensuring that the voices of youth are heard and valued in local government.



FREDERICK

Holiday Traditions....



The Frederick Youth Council had the privilege of participating in this year's Kris Kringle celebration, marking a joyful occasion as they guided the festivities and celebrated their first holiday together. The council members embraced the spirit of the season by creating fun, ugly sweaters and building genuine relationships with one another, which has been a key element of their journey. Despite the chilly weather, they enthusiastically showed up to cheer on the festivities, fully engaging in Frederick's cherished traditions. This experience not only strengthened their bonds but also highlighted their commitment to community involvement and the joy of shared moments.



Y Taking the Stage



The Frederick Youth Council hosted its inaugural community event, featuring speakers Alex Hossainkhail from the Maryland Youth Council, including Mayor Michael O'Connor, who opened the gathering with an inspiring welcome speech. The Youth Council members took the opportunity to introduce themselves, engaging the audience in a lively Q&A session that underscored the importance of community feedback. This dynamic event not only showcased the Youth Council's leadership skills but also fostered a collaborative atmosphere, as community members and stakeholders expressed their specific needs and desires for future initiatives. The Youth Council effectively rocked the stage, facilitating an engaging dialogue that invited participation from all attendees.

A big shout out to the amazing community partners who showed up and shared their resources at the event! We are grateful to The Office of the Mayor of the City of Frederick, MD, the City of Frederick's Parks and Recreation Department, Frederick County Public Libraries, City Youth Matrix, Asian American Center of Frederick, Urbana HOSA Chapter - Awareness Project, Centro Hispano de Frederick, Transformative Arts Project, YMCA and New Spire Arts. Their presence truly highlighted the success of the event and showcased the incredible power of youth leadership in our community!



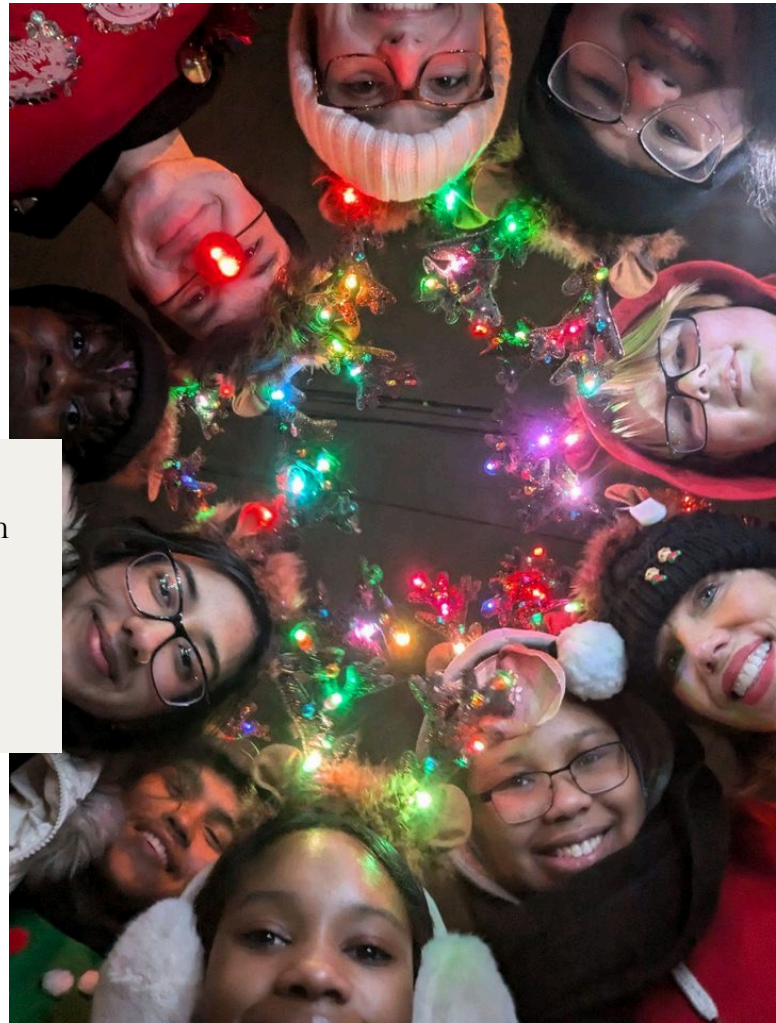


The gift of Mentorship

"Leadership is practiced not so much in words as in attitude and in actions."
- Harold Geneen

I am excited to share my journey as the Youth Council Mentor Manager for the new Youth Council in Frederick. It has been an incredible experience working with an exceptional group of youth, ages 12 to 24, who never cease to amaze me with their talent, wisdom, and true passion for leadership.

These young individuals exemplify the qualities of servant leaders, consistently demonstrating insight and a deep commitment to our community. It has been a rewarding opportunity to guide them in developing their personal leadership styles, supporting them in completing their charter, and becoming active participants in both government and nonprofit sectors.



Together, we have focused on building strong relationships within the community, engaging with various organizations, and facilitating meaningful initiatives. I am eager to support them in the upcoming year as they take on more responsibilities and work to raise visibility for the Youth Council and inspiring other youth to step into and embody their own leadership qualities.

Thank you for your continued support as we nurture the next generation of leaders. Together, we can make a positive impact in our community!

Warm regards,

Dr. Laura Sherwood
Frederick Youth Council Mentor & Manager



UPCOMING IN 2025

JAN

FIELD TRIP TO THE YOUTH CENTER IN GAITHERSBURG

The Youth Council is excited to announce that they will be heading out to Gaithersburg January 16th to explore Gaithersburg Youth Center! This visit aims to inspire them with fresh ideas to support the development of the Frederick Youth Center. Stay tuned for updates on our journey and the insights we gather!



FEB

VISIONING SESSION

The Youth Council is set to engage in Visioning Sessions with the architects from Noelker and Hull in January and February. During these sessions, they will provide feedback and ideas for the future youth center. This is an exciting step in ensuring youth voices are included throughout the planning and development process.



MAY

NOMINATIONS OPEN MAY 1ST – JUNE 1ST

Mark your Calendars! New Youth Council member nominations will be accepted May 1st – June 1st. Interested youth may also self-nominate.



JUN

APPLICATIONS OPEN JUNE 14TH-JULY 13TH

Applications open June 14th-July 13th. During this period, youth must submit their applications to be invited for an interview.



JUL

INTERVIEWS START WEEK OF JULY 20TH

All applicants will be interviewed during the week of July 20th. Welcome announcements will be sent out by mid August.



SEP

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

New council members will be seated on the council and will begin their journey by attending orientation at the Youth Council meeting on September 16th.



Follow the FYC on social media for more information and updates on the application cycle.

www.frederick12to24.org

