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## Erie County Youth Board:

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\* *youth member*

# Erie County Youth Bureau Chronicle

Spring 2021

## Welcome, Kate Hilliman, Sr. Youth Bureau Director!

Please help welcome Kate Hilliman as the new Sr. Youth Bureau Director! Kate joins the Erie County Youth Bureau after several decades in youth development. Kate has worked in many different capacities in the field and brings a wealth of unique and diverse experience and perspectives to her work. A graduate of Bard College (BA) and University at Buffalo (MSW), Kate grew up in Connecticut and worked for the City of New York Department of Parks after college. After her role as a first responder during September 11, 2001, Kate chose to leave New York to pursue her dream of travel and became involved in the unique field of sail training, a field which facilitates positive youth development via hands-on, real-world experiences in leadership, problem solving, and teamwork.

After many years with sail training programs nationwide, Kate moved to Buffalo with her now-husband (and Buffalo native) in 2008 and founded Buffalo's first sail-training non-profit, Buffalo Urban Outdoor Education (BUOE), serving over 8,000 Buffalo youth with free educational programs on Lake Erie and in the classroom. In 2012, Kate realized that her passion for youth had far surpassed her passion for boats, and she began the MSW program at the University at Buffalo. In 2014, Kate left BUOE to work for Say Yes Buffalo as a Family Support Specialist; most recently, Kate was the Executive Director of West Side Community Services, where she is credited with extensive program expansion and organizational transformation.

Kate brings a macro, systems-level perspective to her work and is passionate about building and maintaining effective systems for individuals in need. A self-described "servant-leader and dot-connector", Kate is excited to bring her experience and perspective to the Erie County Youth Bureau and youth program throughout the County. She looks forward to working together with a talented group of practitioners to ensure that all youth have access to the most effective programs and services possible.

Kate currently lives in Hamburg with her husband, Rich, and 7-year old son, Orion. In her free time, Kate can be found doing just about anything outdoors. Hiking, paddle boarding, biking, skiing, snowshoeing, and gardening are some of her biggest interests, and she tries to travel as much as possible with her family. She and her family have never met a road trip or a water park they haven't loved. A singer and musician, Kate is a member of the Wayside Presby-

terian Church, where she is very active in the music program. Kate serves as a board member and officer of the Hamburg Coalition for Equity and Inclusion, and is active in Town of Hamburg government. Kate has maintained her 200-ton US Coast Guard captain's license and hopes to return to "driving boats" in her spare time at some point. For now, she is happy driving a desk, getting dirty in her garden, and keeping up with her very active little boy and his tank of rapidly multiplying freshwater snails.



## Willie Hutch Jones Education & Sports: 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Science Showcase—Recap

On Saturday, March 27th, the WHJESP held its 6th Annual "re-imagined" Science Showcase as a virtual event. Due to Covid-19 gathering restrictions, the organization accomplished a new way for students to showcase their scientific aptitude. With the whimsically and appropriately named theme of "QuaranSTEAM", 24 of the best and brightest elementary through high school students presented their research projects digitally to a panel of judges.

News anchor Claudine Ewing of WGRZ TV-2 returned as our gracious host for this year's showcase, streamed via Zoom, Facebook Live, and is now available to view on the WHJESP YouTube channel. Those who pre-registered were able to attend the WGRZ-TV2 Virtual VIP Waiting Room pre-event, meet Science Showcase sponsors, and were eligible for drawings for Door Dash gift card giveaways throughout the program. Lynne Holden, M.D. Professor of Emergency Medicine and the Vice-chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine delivered a dynamic keynote presentation that encouraged the participants to pursue their passions.

We gratefully acknowledge this year's sponsors for their generous support and commitment to this annual event. This year's gold-level sponsors were Five Star Bank, WGRZ TV-2, Erie County Youth Services, First Niagara Foundation, KeyBank Foundation, 1490 Buffalo Black Achievers, Blue Cross Blue Shield WNY, Uniland Development Company, 93.7 WBLK, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Ingram Micro Company, M&T Bank Foundation, Amerigroup Partnership Plan, and the African Heritage Food Co-Op. We would be amiss if we did not give Andrew Huff of Technically Connected Multimedia Solutions a special acknowledgment for a remarkable job producing the event.

The QuaranSTEAM Science Showcase winners received great prizes, including Chromebooks, Nintendo Switch, and Amazon Gift Cards. All participants received guest passes to the Penn-Dixie Fossil Park and Nature Reserve.

**The 6th Annual WHJESP Science Showcase winners are as follows:**

### Elementary School

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Henry Kinney
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Brayden Hammer
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Nikolas Alexander
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place: CJ Colvin
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place: Jayden Kasprzak
- 5<sup>th</sup> Place: Ella Gawron

### Middle School

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Solin Cruz
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Faith and Iris Barrera

### High School

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Nora and Rory Warren



The Science Showcase organizers planned the event for months through Zoom meetings, emails, texts, and phone calls. The pandemic forced the team to re-think and approach everything differently. This event not only showcased the talented youth of WNY, but was an example that with determination, one could forge through the most difficult of circumstances. That message of empowerment and strength through adversity is a value that #TEAMHUTCH aims to instill in the students who take part in our programs. Along with the annual science fair, we are proud to continue to be a vital resource of afterschool programs, summer sports clinics, extracurricular activities, and clubs, all with an emphasis on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math). We have provided these services, at no cost, for over 37 years.

**Watch the event here: <https://youtu.be/qlqaU3wbNNU> and here: <https://youtu.be/9kHElvqtpYQ>**

**Erie County Youth Services**

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"Erie County Youth Bureau"

**ECYB Mission:** *"To serve youth and families through support of positive youth development programs and juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention programs that strengthen families and communities."*

**COMMUNITY EVENTS:**

- Please see email attachment for a comprehensive list of upcoming events related to juvenile justice, among other topics

We welcome submissions of community events/recaps at any time, so please consider sending us notices of upcoming events and/or photos/videos that you believe might be of interest to your colleagues. Thank you!