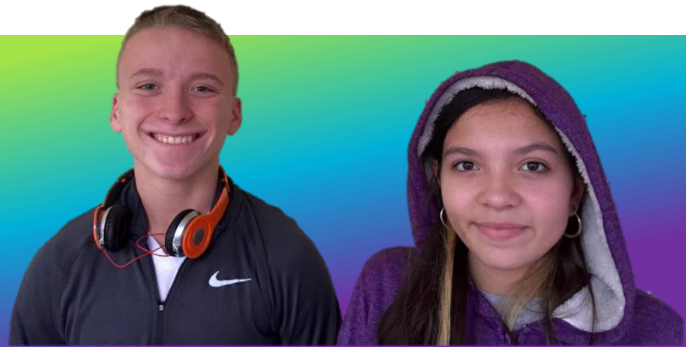


# South End Teen Center Newsletter

Issue: April 2018



## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Battle of the Badges – May 2nd! Join us!

That's right! Save the date! Next Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, is the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Battle of the Badges basketball game! The event is held at the Alford Youth Center. If you're unfamiliar with the Battle, it is a full-court 5-on-5 basketball game featuring Waterville's Police Department versus the Waterville Fire Department. Tickets are \$5 apiece (ages 10 and under are free), there will a delicious dinner for purchase, taco-in-a-bag, courtesy of volunteer Desiree Sirois, and many homemade baked goods all crafted by SETC staff and its teens! All proceeds are to benefit the Teen Center, and a 50/50 raffle will transpire during the game to benefit the family of Corporal Eugene Cole.

Waterville P.D Captain, Sergeant Lincoln Ryder has this to say about the event. "We have really enjoyed partnering with the Teen Center on the event and having a teen participate in the game. The yearly competition with the Fire Department has been a healthy (and sometimes intense) rivalry which has contributed positively (and plenty of ribbing for the loser that particular year). There have been several close games over the years, which were really exciting. There have been a few injuries in the past (cuts, broken bones) which we would like to avoid this year, if possible – the less EMS is involved in the game (other than playing) the better. Also a big part of the event is the opportunity to demonstrate good sportsmanship in athletic competition and to establish positive role models for youth."

Lieutenant Scott Holst of the Waterville Fire Department shared the following: "Sgt. Ryder and myself have been doing this event since it has started. Most games have always been very close. We did have one year, about 3 years ago, when the game went into 2 overtimes. That was a very fun game to watch. All games I know are supposed to be fun and entertaining, but there have been some in the past that took it to be a real knockout game [pun intended?]. In itself it makes it a competitive game, but it is also realized this is supposed to be fun and done for a fundraiser. I just wished we could bring out more people. We do get nice crowds, but I know we could do better."

Challenge accepted! Community, let's fill those seats!

## SETC Coordinator's Corner

March and April have predictably arrived like a lion (a really, really angry lion) and appears to be exiting like a lamb. However, several feet of snow and multiple cancellations were not able to apprehend the unstoppable South End Teen Center!

Despite these wintery challenges, the teens continued to show up and have transformed from bundled-up and shivering into shorts-and-t-shirt-wearing adolescents who are excited to run and play! I am proud to share from September through March we have had 2,128 teen visits!

I am stunned and in awe by the amount of community support we've received from volunteers and organizations in the past few months. Examples include a \$5,000 donation by T-Mobile and an entire day spent with us to improve the Teen Center. Youth-friendly organizations such as Waterville Creates and their fabulous warmth and creative collaborations has been wonderful. Local individuals wanting to do donate their time and talents such as Desiree Sirois, Carrie Haberstock, and Luis Rodriguez were welcomed. Also, the 2013 Inaugural Poet and Colby College Artist in Residence Richard Blanco who hosted a workshop at the Teen Center. It's clear that our community values the Teen Center tremendously and each day brings new and fun adventures for all involved. Thank you!

-Ryan Kneeland

*Who will win the trophy this year?*



## T-Mobile to the Rescue!



The Teen Center is made great by the outstanding community support we receive. Melissa Marable from T-Mobile reached out to us and was hopeful that her team could help us realize a few goals with a monetary donation and an entire day with a handful of energetic and extremely helpful T-Mobile volunteers. Boy did they deliver! They arrived with a \$5,000 check, work gloves and tools. Together they helped transform and update our space.

The team assembled a sorely needed new basketball hoop and several bicycles for the upcoming Bike Swap event. A brand new smart TV and stand were installed in our living area. Old fencing was sledgehammered out of the ground to create more play-space, and raised beds were assembled in anticipation of our farm-to-table collaboration with the wonderful Samuel McClean from Healthy Northern Kennebec and the SNAP-Ed program. Our fabulous Program Manager, Cheryl Leonard, provided pizza, chips and drinks.

Thank you to T-Mobile for their outstanding support! Our heroes include the aforementioned Melissa Marable, Nicole Butler, Patrick Mathias, Carrie Gustin, Justin Nesbitt, Mike Veilleux, Sam Henninger, and Stacy Tortorella. Gratitude!

## Richard Blanco Visits!



When President Obama was re-elected in 2012, he was tasked with selecting a poet to read the Inaugural Poem. In 2013 he addressed the entire nation with the magnificent piece entitled “One Today.”

In March of 2017, Mr. Blanco was at the Teen Center in Waterville leading the teens through a poem he wrote called “Looking for the Gulf Motel.” Discussing the poem line-by-line, Richard and the teens weaved back through time through a journey of our five senses, encouraging the teens to tell their stories about their treasured childhood spaces through smell, touch, taste, sound and vision.

There is a line in this poem featuring a popular meal from Richard’s upbringing as a Cuban-American citizen – arroz con pollo. One of our teen’s parents was present to make a meal for us during our event. He made his daughter’s favorite dish from Puerto Rico to share with all of the guests, and coincidentally it was...arroz con pollo.

Thank you to Jordia Benjamin from Colby College for make this special evening become a reality!

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