

Civic Engagement: Local children empowered by SUNY Broome program

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By John Miller

The SUNY Broome Public Achievement Team recently gave young Windsor students a chance to improve their home town.

Under the guidance of SUNY Broome coaches – students in SUNY Broome’s CTP 275 course – a select group of Windsor fourth-graders met with their local mayor. During the meeting with Mayor Ronald Harding, the students discussed the possibility of fixing up Main Street.

All of the proposed ideas were viable: fix cracked sidewalks, pick up litter, plant trees and flowers, install benches and more garbage cans, and possibly paint a mural here or there. Lucy Beattie asked Mayor Harding if the town could have an annual planting day, during which volunteers plant flowers and trees all over Windsor. Of all the ideas, the mayor seemed most receptive to this latter one. He told the students they need to put a proposal together for him to present to the Board of Trustees.

The SUNY Broome Public Achievement program aims to get local children involved in the civic world. According to their mission statement, “all children will be empowered to use their voices to make a difference.” The program coaches are SUNY Broome students who seek to teach children the “attributes of democratic citizenship through the following models: strengths-based learning, growth mindset, goal setting and higher order questioning techniques.”

In addition to the Windsor team, SUNY Broome students also worked with third-graders in the Johnson City school district, who then developed a community-wide peace day in a park to building a safe and positive community.

“As professors, our hope was to inspire students to be conscientious and civic-minded practitioners. Through coursework, lectures, and reflections the students worked diligently to meet or exceed the course outcomes,” said Professor Lisa Strahley and Instructor Christine Duffy-Webb. “What we observed, which was far beyond our intended goals, was an amazing group of individuals who rose to every occasion with passion, dedication, and an intrinsic desire to always be their best.”

John Miller is a SUNY Broome student.



Guided by SUNY Broome student coaches, schoolchildren in Windsor recently brought their Main Street improvement plans to their local mayor.



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