

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE MEMORANDUM  
#6-2021**

**DATE:** March 14, 2022  
**TO:** Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members  
**THROUGH:** Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*  
**FROM:** Amanda J. Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture *ajp*  
**SUBJECT:** Youth Commission Annual Report

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**PURPOSE**

To provide City Council with an update regarding recent activities of the Northglenn Youth Commission.

**BACKGROUND**

Throughout the year, members of the Northglenn Youth Commission provide City Council with a brief narrative report. With the exception of the annual report, the report includes a narrative summary of activities and accomplishments from recent months, as well as a preview of upcoming events and activities. At the end of the year, both a written report and a narrative report are provided to summarize the entire year.

This report is for the year 2021. Youth Commission member Nazly Soufiani will attend the City Council meeting to present the report. She will provide an update regarding the following topics:

- Board membership and recruiting
- Healthy beverages initiative
- Tri-County Health Department Mental Health Committee
- Little Libraries
- Youth listening session
- Virtual meetings
- Website update
- Northglenn Pride event
- Goal setting
- Northglenn Recreation Center, Senior Center & Theatre grand opening
- Holiday fun

**BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial or time impacts to the City.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for informational purposes only.

**STAFF REFERENCE**

If Council members have any questions, please contact Amanda Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture, at [apeterson@northglenn.org](mailto:apeterson@northglenn.org) or 303.450.8950.

**ATTACHMENT**

1. 2021 Northglenn Youth Commission Annual Report

# Northglenn Youth Commission



# 2021 Annual Report

# BOARD of DIRECTORS

## Meetings

The Youth Commission Board of Directors holds a meeting on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. During much of 2021, these meetings were held virtually. The first meeting of the month is a formal business meeting; the second is a working meeting. Agendas and minutes, along with other board documents, can be found at [www.northglenn.org/NYC](http://www.northglenn.org/NYC). All Youth Commission meetings are open to the public. Youth who are interested in joining the Youth Commission or those that have an idea to share are encouraged to attend.

## Join the Board

To be eligible, interested youth must be between the ages of 13 and 18, and live in Northglenn or attend school in the Adams 12 Five Star School District. Applications are available on the city's website at [www.northglenn.org/nyc](http://www.northglenn.org/nyc).

## Current Members

The following individuals served on the Youth Commission's Board of Directors at some point during 2021. Youth Commissioners serve one-year terms; any member in good standing may be reappointed for consecutive terms.

- Abhiyan Barailee
- Meera Bipin, Vice President\*
- Ben Cathcart, Board Member\*
- Lily Cunis
- Elizabeth Donnici, President\*
- Zen Kretsinger, Board Member\*
- Isaiah Salgado Rael, Treasurer\*
- Nazly Soufiani, Secretary\*
- Griffin Wood, Applicant\*

\* denotes December 2021 active board members

## Recent Graduates

This year we said goodbye to one graduating senior, Lily Cunis. Lily was a board member from 2017 to 2021, serving two terms as president. During her time with the Northglenn Youth Commission she took on a leadership role with several projects, including the installation of Little Libraries at three Northglenn schools, a Voter Registration Drive, and the development of a Youth Resources page on the city's website. During the past year, Lily represented the Northglenn Youth Commission on the DRCOG Regional Transportation Plan Youth Advisory Committee. She participated in meetings with the DRCOG staff, providing feedback as to how the proposed transportation plan could better meet the needs of youth now and in the future - and learned a lot about long-range regional planning along the way!

During the 2019-2020 school year, Lily had the opportunity to study abroad in Berlin, Germany with the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program. Lily graduated from Legacy High School and is now at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. Lily was the



recipient of the Antonio Esquibel Northglenn Youth Commission Scholarship, the Northglenn Youth Incorporated Scholarship, and a Northglenn-Thornton Rotary scholarship.

## Board Openings

As of the end of 2021, there were 8 vacancies available on the Youth Commission's Board of Directors. Recruitment for new board members continued to be challenging in 2021, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several applications have been submitted, and one new member has joined the board. The openings are posted on the Youth Commission's webpage, and have been promoted in the Northglenn Connection, a direct-mail postcard to residents and on social media. Once meetings are able to fully resume in person, additional outreach will be initiated to fill any remaining vacancies.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## TCHD Healthy Beverages

The Youth Commission was approached by the Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) to provide feedback regarding an effort to promote healthy beverages at restaurants in Northglenn. Staff from TCHD attended a Youth Commission meeting to discuss the work that had been done in Aurora and other parts of the TCHD region. They explained that the goal was to enact local ordinances to require that restaurants include healthy options like water or milk on the menu, leaving soda or other sugary beverages off the children's menu, available by request only. The Youth Commission voiced support for this effort.

Two Youth Commissioners, Isaiah Salgado Rael and Elizabeth Donnici, agreed to sit on the TCHD Healthy Beverages committee to conduct further research, work with restaurants, and develop a policy approach. TCHD hopes to bring a policy forward for consideration in 2022.



## Little Libraries

Upon her return from Germany, Lily picked up where she left off—with the Little Libraries project. She visited several of the installed libraries, and refreshed them with a new set of books to ensure that they were ready to go for anyone who stopped by.

Other Youth Commissioners also reached out to the staff at each of the schools that have a Little Library, checking in to see if there was anything else that the schools needed from the Youth Commission.



**MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

### Join the Youth Committee for Mental Health


Partners for Children's Mental Health is looking for diverse Colorado youth (ages 13-19) to join our youth advisory board.

YCMH members will participate in a 2-hour virtual meeting each month to advise PCMH as we work to improve youth mental health & reduce youth suicide in Colorado.

YCMH members receive:

- o \$30/month
- o Work experience
- o Professional development & coaching
- o Opportunities to engage with youth across Colorado to create real change in youth mental health

COLORADO YOUTH: APPLY BY DEC. 23  
VISIT [PCMH.ORG/YCMH](https://pcmh.org/ycmh) OR SCAN THE QR CODE



## TCHD Mental Health Committee

The Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) is forming a Youth Committee for Mental Health. The Youth Commission was again asked to provide feedback and help TCHD develop a model for the committee. Youth Commissioner Elizabeth Donnici served in an advisory capacity to TCHD, providing a

youth perspective. Youth Commissioners were invited to join the committee, and were asked to refer interested youth to this new TCHD committee. The Youth Commission looks forward to hearing more about the Youth Committee for Mental Health and the opportunity to partner with them in the future.

# PROJECTS

## Listening Session



THE NORTHGLENN YOUTH COMMISSION  
AND DISE BOARD INVITE YOU TO  
**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**  
**YOUTH COMMUNITY  
LISTENING SESSION**  
SEPTEMBER 28 | 7 P.M.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 11701  
COMMUNITY CENTER DRIVE  
*FACILITATED BY THE EQUITY PROJECT*



In late 2020, following the race and equity training led by Naomi Nishi, Youth Commissioners determined that they wanted to continue to take steps to learn more about youth perspectives on diversity and social equity in the community. The board determined that this session would be most productive in person, and chose to wait until fall 2021 to hold the session. Partnering with the DISE Board, the Youth Commission co-hosted a youth listening session on September 28. The session

was facilitated by Monica from the Equity Project. Monica provided attendees with some definitions, historical points and questions to get the conversation started. Attendees were able to have a safe, meaningful and honest conversation with one another.

Participants included Youth Commissioners, students from several local schools, a City Council member and a DISE Board member. The discussion really drove the Youth Commission to prioritize the needs of LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC youth in the community.

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## Virtual Meetings

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Commission continued to hold virtual meetings throughout the first half of 2021. We were excited to be able to hold an outdoor, in-person meeting in May to celebrate Lily's graduation and the end of the school year. Following that meeting, we took a hiatus for the summer months, as allowed per the bylaws.

We resumed a combination of in-person and virtual meetings throughout the fall and winter of 2021. It was great to be able to meet face to face, even with the mask order in place!



## Northglenn Youth Commission

# YOU'RE INVITED

Tuesday, November 2 at 7:00 p.m

Northglenn Recreation Center  
1 E. Memorial Parkway (south entrance)

All youth ages 13-18 who live in Northglenn or attend an Adams 12 Five Star School are welcome! Dinner will be provided.

## SAVE the DATE



**Northglenn Youth Commission**  
Giving a Voice to Northglenn's Youth!

## Recruiting

With several openings on the board, and meetings resuming an in-person format, the Youth Commission held a brainstorming and recruiting session on Tuesday, Nov. 2. Although there were no new participants at this meeting, the board members were able to have a robust discussion about their goals. They also agreed to continue recruiting new members through personal connections at school or in the community.

The following meeting, new applicant Griffin Wood attended his first meeting. In addition, board members Nazly Soufiani and Meera Bipin contacted the Student Leadership sponsor at Hulstrom Options, and made arrangements to speak to students about the Youth Commission early in the new year.

## Website

Throughout the pandemic, Youth Commissioners identified mental health as a priority topic. With the transition to online classes, virtual meetings and minimal in-person gatherings, Youth Commissioners felt that teens were disconnected from other people and, as a result, their mental health was suffering. To address this challenge, the Youth Commission decided to update their webpage on the city's website.

The goals for this webpage refresh were three-fold. First was the opportunity to connect with youth by personalizing the webpage with photos and information about each Youth Commissioner. The second priority was to provide "brain breaks" with short activities that youth could connect with at any time. These brain breaks included opportunities for creativity, humor or games. The final priority was to help youth identify when their mental health might be suffering, and help them connect with local resources.

Youth Commissioners met with Klynn Delohery, City Public Communications Specialist, to learn about the city's website and how to best update the existing webpage. They spent several months researching and gathering resources. After several meetings with Klynn, they developed a framework for the page and provided input to the design of the page.

The final page includes four categories—Health & Wellness, Boredom Busters, Relaxation and Meet the Youth Commission. The Youth Commissioners will continue to review the page and will add or remove links based on the needs that they observe amongst their peers.



# Northglenn PRIDE



The Youth Commission was proud to support Northglenn's first PRIDE event in July 2021! Board members were in attendance at the event, volunteering to support the Silent Disco. Everyone agreed they had a ton of fun handing out headphones, talking to attendees and watching the dance party. Some couldn't contain their excitement, and had to put on a pair of headphones and join in!

Pictured to the left are Zen Kretsinger, Nazly Soufiani, Ben Cathcart and Isaiah Salgado Rael, enjoying food from the food trucks and ready to distribute headphones for the Silent Disco.

## Goal Setting

The Youth Commission held a series of goal-setting sessions in September and October. During these goal setting sessions Youth Commissioners looked back at priorities or ideas from the previous year, identified new possibilities and reflected on successful projects. Utilizing the "SMART Goals" process to develop goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Bound helped turn a list of great ideas into a list of great ideas that could be implemented. By turning a broad statement into smaller action steps, accomplishing a big goal is suddenly more manageable.

Over the course of several meetings, a lengthy list of broad ideas was refined to identify two priority areas, as well as action steps to help address those priority areas. The two priority areas that the Youth Commission will work towards addressing in 2022 are homelessness and the power imbalance that exists for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ youth. Both of these priority areas have been important to the Youth Commission for quite some time, and were reflected in the work the group did throughout 2021. These goals, and the associated action steps, were identified as a tangible way to make a positive, meaningful and immediate impact on the community.

### Northglenn Youth Commission Priority Projects

**#1 ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS**

Help address homelessness by:

1. Purchasing & serving a meal at the city's temporary shelter.
2. Meeting with CRU staff to learn more about CRU and issues that people experiencing homelessness are facing in our community. Develop a project based on this discussion.

**#2 D.I.S.E. POWER IMBALANCE**

Address the power imbalance that exists for BIPOC & LGBTQIA+ youth by:

1. Having a Youth Commissioner attend a DISE meeting to introduce themselves and learn more about the DISE board.
2. Inviting DISE liaison to attend a Youth Commission meeting to explore ways that the Youth Commission can make an impact.
3. Volunteer at Adams County PRIDE & the Art for LGBTQIA+ Mental Health
4. Support the use of gender neutral language
  - ★ Recommend edits to the Municipal Code and other city documents
  - ★ Normalize the use of/asking about preferred pronouns at Youth Commission meetings, activities or events
5. Host a youth-led listening session with a broad focus. Use the input to develop next steps or a longer-term project.

**2021-2022**

PLEASE JOIN US!



NEW

CITY OF Northglenn  
Recreation Center,  
Senior Center & Theatre

WEDNESDAY  
OCT. 6, 2021

VIP RIBBON  
CUTTING

- 5:15 p.m. Gather at main entrance
- 5:30 p.m. Ribbon cutting ceremony
- 6 p.m. Program in the Parsons Theatre
- 6:45 p.m. Champagne toast under the new artwork
- 6:50-8:30 p.m. Reception and tours. Appetizer and dessert stations, cash bar, displays and self-paced tours of the facility



RSVP by Friday, Oct. 1 by using your smart phone camera to scan the QR code, or by calling 303.280.7821.

Semi formal/business attire requested.

As a VIP guest, you and your family are welcome to come and use the new facility during "Friends and Family" days from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. 7 and 8. Pools, gym, and workout areas will be open to invited guests only.

The public grand opening is 1 to 7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 9. It is open-house style with free activities inside, bands and food trucks outside, and a fireworks finale at 7 p.m.

The new facility will be open for normal operations beginning Sunday, Oct. 10.

# Recreation Center, Senior Center & Theatre Grand Opening

Youth Commissioners Elizabeth Donnici and Meera Bipin were proud to represent the board at the VIP grand opening of the long-awaited new recreation center, senior center and theatre. Having previously had the opportunity to weigh in on the amenities in the facility throughout the design process, they were excited to be a part of the opening festivities!



## 2021 Holiday Fun

After a year filled with virtual meetings, and the uncertainty that lingered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Youth Commissioners were able to gather in person to celebrate the year's accomplishments. Choosing to keep the event a bit low-key, the Youth Commissioners met at the Recreation Center, with dinner from Café Rio. Everyone had a chance to build a gingerbread house. And, the proceeds from the purchase of the gingerbread house kits went to support a good cause—Habitat for Humanity.







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