



**WASHTENAW COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CREATES YOUTH COMMISSION**

At their Wednesday, May 15 meeting, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners voted on a [resolution](#) creating the first-ever Washtenaw County Youth Commission. This resolution affirms the work of a previously convened youth task force, a group of teens representative of all areas of the county, and facilitated by leadership from The Neutral Zone, Corner Health and the University of Michigan School of Social Work.

In April, the task force presented a year's worth of research, sharing their findings with the Board of Commissioners, and recommending that a youth commission be formalized to ensure youth have rights to share concerns and discuss issues that affect their lives. The Board's commitment to the Youth Commission means that our young leaders can be a critical resource in addressing the needs of youth and gain valuable experience in their engagement with community and government affairs.

*"Young people are our future, as well as our present, and witnessing the commitment to civic engagement by these teens gives me confidence that our future is in very capable, competent*

*hands. Their collective vision for the best way to shape the services we provide to our community will prove to be invaluable to this Board” states Board of Commissioners Chairman Jason Morgan. “It has been very exciting to initiate this effort with Commissioner Felicia Brabec and the leadership from Neutral Zone and Corner Health. I am so impressed with the diverse group of outstanding teens from across our county who’ve worked to create our county’s first-ever youth commission.”*

The importance of a youth commission is felt powerfully by teens. Teen Brianna Camero-Sulak shared with commissioners, her belief that youth are mature enough to be at the table to make meaningful decisions. Another teen, Zaynab Elkolaly highlights her passion about this project as a way to amplify the participation for youth of color in our county.

The newly formed Youth Commission will be tasked with assessing and exploring youth issues in the community through surveys, focus groups, interviews and town hall meetings; analyzing youth issues, educating youth about important issues affecting their community, and making recommendations to the Board of Commissioners to help the County improve its youth services.

Membership is comprised of 21 individuals, between the ages of 13-18, 2 from each commissioner district plus 3 at-large seats, all seats are appointed by the Board of Commissioners; with a 12-month term of service. Meetings will be facilitated by members of the commission and supported by the Neutral Zone. A Washtenaw County Commissioner will serve in an advisory capacity, as a liaison to the Board of Commissioners, to help the group experience success with their efforts.

Applications for the commission are expected to be available in August, with the first commission beginning its work in the Fall of 2019.

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