

STATE SENATOR • MARTHA G. SCOTT • 2ND DISTRICT

Scott Press Release

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SENATOR SCOTT RECOGNIZES HAMTRAMCK STUDENTS FOR CREATING SMOKE-FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Michigan Surgeon General Helps Present Tribute

LANSING, Michigan – State Senator Martha G. Scott (D-Highland Park) tonight will recognize students at Kosciuszko Middle School in Hamtramck for successfully lobbying to make their school district a 24-7 smoke-free zone.

The young people who worked for the smoke-free designation are part of the Generation With Promise (GWP) project, which aims to prevent childhood obesity and smoking in adolescents. The GWP project is led by Michigan Surgeon General Dr. Kimberlydawn Wisdom, who will join Senator Scott this evening in presenting the students with a Senate Tribute.

Senator Scott and Dr. Wisdom will present the Tribute to the GWP Kosciuszko Student Action Team (SAT) at a school award ceremony tonight at the Hamtramck High School Community Center. Dr. Wisdom will also present the students with a certificate from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH).

The Kosciuszko Middle School campus was smoke-free between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., but students noticed that smoking was taking place outside of those hours. Inspired by their ability to create change through Generation With Promise, the students made a presentation to Principal Nuo Ivezcaj advocating to make the campus smoke-free at all times. Mr. Pvezcaj took their concerns to district officials and in turn, the School Board decided to expand the current no smoking rule to a 24-7 no smoking policy across the District.

“These remarkable students are proof that young people can and do make a difference in their community, and I am so proud of them,” Senator Scott said. “I hope we can make this a statewide policy. I’ve been working on making this issue a priority for all communities for many years. We need to make sure that everyone can breathe freely in non-smoking facilities across the state.”

“The superintendent and the school board are to be commended for listening to the students and taking this issue seriously,” Dr. Wisdom said. “We want the Student Action Teams and young people throughout the state of Michigan to know that this is the kind of policy change that can occur if they work hard to make it happen.”

The GWP Student Action Team also has been busy making changes to the school environment that will mean healthy food and more physical activity for teachers and students. Koscuiszko has used part of the GWP grant money to fund the purchase of a salad bar and a smoothie machine in the school cafeteria.

The school has also purchased weightlifting equipment, treadmills and other exercise gear that is accessible to all of the students outside of physical education classes. It also has opened its weight room to teachers, parents and the community at large before and after school hours.

“Generation With Promise has helped these students understand that they have a voice,” Mr. Ivezaj said. “Teachers also understand that in order for kids to function in the classroom, students must eat better, engage in physical activity and learn in a healthy, smoke-free environment.”

Through GWP, 16 Level One schools received a \$25,000 award. The project links Governor Granholm’s Cities of Promise initiative in underserved communities with MDCH and the Michigan Steps Up healthy lifestyles initiative. The four-year project empowers Student Action Teams to drive change related to health priorities for their schools.

In addition to the Cities of Promise, other Generation With Promise partners are the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness, Health & Sports/Michigan Fitness Foundation; the Michigan Department of Education; the Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Coalition; the City of Detroit, Wayne County, Oakland County and Berrien County health departments; Health Kids Healthy Michigan Coalition; Henry Ford Health System; Michigan State University Extension; the University of Michigan; and Wayne State University.

GWP is funded by a \$5 million grant from the WK Kellogg Foundation (www.wkkf.org) through the Michigan Department of Community Health. For more information on GWP, please visit <http://www.michigan.gov/surgeongeneral/0,1607,7-216-47379---,00.html>.

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Senator Scott represents the 2nd Senate District, which includes areas of Detroit and the cities of Hamtramck, Harper Woods, Highland Park and all of the Grosse Pointes. She serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee.