

The Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership is a group of committed public, private, and religious organizations and concerned individuals whose goals are to develop an awareness of and devise solutions to the alcohol and substance abuse problems and other high-risk behaviors among youth in our community. The partnership meets and works to strengthen the coalition and implement prevention and intervention strategies through community collaboration. Our goal is to prevent the use and reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and its negative effects on children and families. To achieve these goals, we advocate for healthy and productive lifestyles and respect for the diverse needs of the Throggs Neck community.

TNCAP Monthly Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2023, from 12 Noon – 1:30 pm
In-Person Meeting

PRESENT		
NAME	AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	SECTOR
Christine Cavallucci	<i>ADAPP SA Prevention</i>	
Dawn Rodriguez-Insanalli	<i>ADAPP SA Prevention</i>	
Kassandra Bonilla	<i>ADAPP SA Prevention</i>	
Patrick Caruso	<i>Community Board 10</i>	
Peter DelDebbio	<i>American Legion</i>	(Fraternal Organization)
Greta Ratjen, Principal	<i>Principal, PS 72</i>	(Education/School)
Felicia Mitchell	<i>P & J Beacon</i>	(Youth Serving Organization)
Veronica Brugeman	<i>Parent Coordinator PS 72</i>	(Education/School)
Stephanie Rodriguez	<i>Rep for: Councilwoman Marjorie Velazquez</i>	(Government)
SSG Oscar Ponce	<i>NY National Guard Counter Drug Task Force</i>	(SA Prevention Organization)
Sherrill Cropper	<i>Throggs Neck Merchants Association</i>	(Business Organization)
Fabian Wander	<i>Wander Consulting</i>	
Robert Spencer	<i>Office of Bronx DA</i>	(Law Enforcement)
Aurora Ronda	<i>Community Education Council</i>	(Education/School)
Millie Stone	<i>Fort Schuyler Presbyterian Church</i>	(Religious)
Deborah Acevedo Claudio	<i>Parent Coordinator, U/M</i>	(Education/School)
GUESTS		
Sen. Nathalia Fernandez	<i>New York State Senate, 34th Senate District</i>	(State Government)
Tiffani Winstead	<i>Assistant to Senator Nathalia Fernandez</i>	(State Government)
ABSENT		
Guillermo Flores	<i>NYC Smoke-Free</i>	(State Government)
David You	<i>NY National Guard Counter Drug Task Force</i>	(SA Prevention Organization)
Ronni Katz, Chevar Francis Milo Ward, Nanor Arakelian	<i>NYC PRC SA Prevention</i>	



THROGGS NECK
COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Creating a Bridge of Prevention and Promise for Our Community

Officer Vargas	<i>NYPD 45th Pct.</i>	(Law Enforcement)
Leida Velazquez	<i>Throggs Neck Public Library</i>	
Sr. Patricia Warner	<i>Preston Center for Compassion</i>	(Religious)
Rhonda Morris Devlin	<i>Retired Police Officer/Former Liaison 45th Precinct</i>	
Lakiema Alexander Edwin Scott	<i>P & J Beacon</i>	(Youth Serving Organization)
Paul Gumina	<i>Renaissance HS</i>	(Education/School)
Turan Balik	<i>Bronx Arts & Science Charter School</i>	(Education/School)
Venus Moore	<i>NY Problem Gambling</i>	(SA Prevention Organization)
Susan Vairo	<i>NYC Dept of Education</i>	(Education/School)
Teresa Wong	<i>Parent Coordinator, MS 101</i>	(Education/School)
Betty Williams	<i>Parent Coordinator, PS 182</i>	(Education/School)
Tamika Morales	<i>Outreach Coordinator, Montefiore Division of Substance Abuse</i>	
Suzette DiCecco	<i>Parent Coordinator, PS 14</i>	(Education/School)
Lisa Schiliro	<i>Parent Coordinator, PS 304</i>	(Education/School)
Jonathan Polanco	<i>Polanco Wealth Strategies</i>	
Kern Mojica	<i>Earl Monroe New Renaissance Basketball School</i>	(Education/School)
Guillermo Flores	<i>NYC Smoke-Free</i>	(State Government)
Dawn Morello	<i>First Lutheran Church of Throggs Neck</i>	(Religious)
Jonathan Pichardo Christina Barnes	<i>NY National Guard Counter Drug Task Force</i>	(SA Prevention Organization)
Kristen Harty	<i>SAPIS</i>	(School)
Lily Urban		

Members approved the March minutes.

Patrick Caruso: Welcome, and introductions of all the members were led by Patrick Caruso.

Felicia Mitchell: P&J Beacon is hosting a Spring into Health Fair on May 20th. Members were advised to contact Patrick or Dawn if they would like to table at the event to advertise their organization and TNCAP. There is no cost to table at the event, and tables and chairs will be provided by Beacon.

Patrick Caruso: The First Lutheran Church is hosting a TV & Movie Trivia Night on Saturday, April 29. All proceeds will be donated to FLC to fund the replacement of the roof on the parsonage.

Dawn Insanalli: Emailed the TNCAP members “Talk, They Hear You” flyers. The links in the digital flyer are clickable. The flyers are a resource tool all members are encouraged to share at events for parents to make it easier to communicate with their children. The flyers can be printed and emailed. There are multiple downloadable flyer links on the back.

There is a poster board with a QR code that links to the app download. The app gives all the tools and resources right on the phone. A poster board is being made for PS72. Dawn can lend out the poster if a member needs it. There are also flyers of the poster with the QR code that can be distributed.

Sen. Nathalia Fernandez: Gave a brief history of her time as the NYC Bronx Regional Rep for Gov. Cuomo. Patrick led introductions of the TNCAP members to the Senator.

Sen. Fernandez gave an update on some of her current activities. She Advocated for the Fire Department to ensure they have capital funding and funding for volunteer firefighters, and for Latina and Black male youth taskforces (both groups experience high suicide rates). As chair of the Committee on Alcohol and Substance Use Disorder, her goal is to meet with medical professionals regarding the new substances in the community, such as xylazine, which isn’t affected by NARCAN. She is working on a bill for insurance to cover mental health and substance use services. She is aware of the lack of workforce for behavioral health due to low salaries and people leaving the community due to the increase in the cost of living.

Other committees Sen. Fernandez is a member of include transportation, mental health, and labor. She spoke with the Throggs Neck Merchant Association to work with the MTA in regards to expanding shuttle services and other transportation to the East Bronx, which has limited train and bus service.

Sen. Fernandez will soon have an office in Throggs Neck and would like to be part of the Merchant’s Association. Once the office is ready, it will be open to the community.

TNCAP members expressed their concerns regarding their community to Sen. Fernandez. Sherrill Cropper stated that East Throggs Neck is the least healthy community, and asked the senator if there was anything she can do about nutrition and food insecurities. Patrick talked about programs to destigmatize drug abuse treatment. Greta Ratjen discussed the lack of safety agents in schools and communication issues such as no notice for calling out, and leaving her school unprotected. Another concern she shared was the police are not doing enough to protect the schools from marijuana smoking on the premises. She stated the police do not want to interfere because marijuana is legal. Christine Cavallucci mentioned that the 41st Precinct (for the FSBC in the South Bronx) monitors stores to see who is selling illegal items such as candies and gummies with marijuana, but it is a 3-step process. The store can issue a summons but the store can still sell in the meantime. Dispensaries need to double-check that stores have a license to sell.

Sen. Nathalia Fernandez: The Nourish New York program connects farmers to food pantries, bringing upstate products to the city. She is hoping to keep the funding despite the governor proposing less



funding than the previous year. Sen. Fernandez is advocating for more funding and healthy school meals for all.

The Attorney General has proposed that if you are caught selling marijuana, businesses can be shut down for 10 years. Hopefully, it will be the incentive to keep businesses from illegally selling marijuana.

Sen. Fernandez agreed to reach out to the police substation near Greta's school to make the connection and share the principal's concerns regarding school safety.

Sherrill Cropper was presented with an award by Millie Stone for the work she has done in the community. She also received a city citation from Marjorie Velasquez.

The meeting concluded at 1:34 pm.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 3, 2023 via Zoom.