

Sidewalks, skating rink, & more included in students' vision for RP

CAPathon produces exciting plans for downtown renewal, including healthy, eco-friendly aspects

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The Rocky Point Career Advisory Partnership hosted Tuesday its first CAPathon, a competition designed to challenge students to develop real-life business plans.

Founded in 2004, the CAP program prepares students for the workforce and offers opportunities to explore future career options. During a February CAP meeting, students and community members developed the theme "Redesigning Downtown Rocky Point" for this year's CAPathon, which took place Tuesday at Rocky Point High School. There, 15 students, divided into five teams, presented their ideas to a panel of 10 judges including Eric Alexander, executive director of Vision Long Island; Diane Burke and Joseph Sanseverino, members of the Board of Education; Drew Martin, president of the Rocky Point Civic Association; and Mike Poveromo, owner of Family Time Party Rental, tourism director of the Port Jefferson Station Chamber of Commerce and past business chairperson of CAP.

"They did this with the sole

thought of revitalizing the community," CAP Education Chairperson Nick Pappas said of the students. The most critical lesson learned in school is to "become an active member of the community," Pappas said, and these students deserve "special credit" for going the extra mile.

At the CAPathon, Team Go Green presented its plan for a recreation center that offers multi-generational activities and raises awareness to the growing problems in the ecosystem. Located on Broadway, the recreation center would attract residents of all ages by providing inventive ways to educate the public and a variety of activities including yoga, tutoring and arts and crafts, according to the team. Construction of the building would include important energy-efficient elements such as solar panels and fluorescent light bulbs, and recycling bins would be placed throughout the hamlet in an effort to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Team Bella Vita presented a vision for a plaza consisting of Dolce Vita, a sweet shop and restaurant; Hairspray, an affordable hair



Photo by Jennifer Choi

Team Inspire members Jade Herbstman, grade 10; Cindy Siefert, grade 12; and Charlotte Davis, grade 10; are flanked by BOE President Joseph Sanseverino, CAP Education Chair Nick Pappas and BOE member Diane Burke.

salon; Sound of Music, a music store for lessons and instrument rentals; Hallock Music Hall, an outdoor entertainment area; and Carousel Park, a children's park with a playground. Team CC Inc. also introduced a plan for a pedestrian-friendly area equipped with Restaurant Row, which would of-

fer culturally diverse food, a one-room movie theater and a book store. Health food kiosks would also be available for those utilizing the upcoming Rails to Trails bike path.

Continuing with the theme of providing a space for community members, Team Neox presented

Glows, an indoor glow-in-the-dark miniature golf course. Located in downtown Rocky Point, the two-story establishment would also offer an arcade and a food court, according to the team. Although other mini golf facilities exist in neighboring communi-

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ties, Glows' only indoor competition in the area would be Holey Cow Indoor Golf in East Northport, according to team members.

While the judges seemed impressed by these ideas, Team Inspire's plan to renovate sidewalks and aid the Rails to Trails project landed its members in the top spot. The team's vision includes The Rink, a family-friendly roller skating rink, and installation of sidewalks on main roads to reduce the chances of injury when walking or bike-riding. The teammates, who also conducted a survey regarding sidewalks, said 20 out of 22 people they interviewed were in favor of them.

Thanks to donations from the Bank of Smithtown and the Council for Dedicated Merchants, each member of

CAP encourages students become the solution rather than remain a bystander.

Team Inspire received a \$100 Visa gift card for taking first place in the CAPathon. In addition, members of the second-place team, Neox, each re-

ceived a \$50 gift card, while each member of Team Bella Vita received a \$25 gift card for coming in third place.

"We worked so hard for this," said Charlotte Davis of Team Inspire. "We felt really confident."

Louise Timms, business chairperson of CAP, applauded all the students for their efforts and said, "They're dealing with real work situations, and that kind of education is priceless." School board member Diane Burke also encouraged students to become a "solution" rather than a "bystander" and encouraged them to attend future civic meetings to share their ideas.