

Youth Political Participation Program

Eagleton Institute of Politics

RUTGERS

Dear Friends of YPPP (Eagleton's Youth Political Participation Program):

Politics matters to you and you matter to politics. This theme has run through all of YPPP's work, both on this campus and in local high school classrooms all year and particularly this spring semester.



RU Ready™ Young Leaders Conference

Now in its ninth year, Eagleton's *RU Ready™* program brought teams of Rutgers students into the classrooms of New Brunswick High School (NBHS) to administer engaging workshops on the role of politics in students' lives and the role young adults can play in politics. The 200 or so high students who experienced *RU Ready™* participated in campaign simulations, created mock social media campaigns and even crafted public service announcements to highlight the importance of youth political participation. These lessons were amplified at the *RU Ready™ Young Leaders Conference*, at which a selection of NBHS students was offered

opportunities to interact with young leaders from the Rutgers campus and practice political leadership skills. *RU Ready™* was brought to life by an outstanding group of students from the Darien Civic Engagement Project.



YPPP's work studying the topic of young adults holding political office and building the capacity of young adults to run for office took giant leaps this semester. Student researchers from the Aresty Research Assistant Program, Amy Eng (Class of 2017) and Harry Morgan (Class of 2016), completed

and presented their findings regarding young elected leaders holding office at the highest levels (read more [here](#)). As an extension of this research, YPPP and the League of Women Voters of New Jersey's Young People's Network piloted a new initiative, *RU Running?* -- a training for politically interested college students. Participants wrote and delivered stump speeches, heard from young adults serving in office here in New Jersey, and participated in role-playing exercises that allowed them to practice core campaign skills. For years to come, we hope that *RU Running?* will provide students, on the Rutgers campus and beyond, both the skills and the encouragement to run for office one day.

Rutgers' spring semester came to a rousing finish with President Barack Obama's commencement address in which he reminded students, "You got to be a citizen full-time, all the time." Citizenship is a full-time job and participation in politics matters. Certainly, this message underlies all that we have done this year and guides us as we prepare for the upcoming national elections.

We wish you a happy and healthy summer and hope to see you in the fall!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth C. Matto'.

Elizabeth C. Matto, Ph.D.

Director, Youth Political Participation Program

yppp.rutgers.edu



Youth Political Participation Program
Eagleton Institute of Politics · Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
191 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ, 08901 · 848.932.9384
yppp.rutgers.edu · yppp@rci.rutgers.edu
