

For Immediate Release: December 6, 2012

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTY COME TOGETHER TO SHARE IDEAS AND LEARN FROM LOCAL PROFESSIONALS

Students will Present at Rockland Community College on December 14

ROCKLAND COUNTY, New York. How can we plan for communities that provide for all ages and stages of life? Should we provide more places for recreation, employment, or affordable housing? How can we include features that save water and energy, prevent flooding, and preserve nature? How do we balance our economic, social, and environmental needs to ensure a healthy, sustainable future? These are just a few of the questions that students in four of Rockland's high schools have been addressing for the past several weeks as they develop their own plans for the redevelopment of a site they have chosen in their own community.

On Friday, December 14th, students from Spring Valley, Clarkstown South, Tappan Zee, and Nanuet High Schools will come together at Rockland Community College to share their exciting visions for redevelopment with peers and over 20 professionals from the fields of planning, engineering, farming and environmental science, among others. After presenting their plans and receiving feedback from their mentors, mixed groups of students from each of the participating high schools will work together to map out a plan for the redevelopment of a common site - the Rockland Psychiatric Center in Orangetown, an area currently being considered for redevelopment by the Town. This is a special opportunity for these youth to learn about and provide input on a significant planning project that offers a myriad of opportunities and challenges.

Andy Stewart, Orangetown Town Supervisor, and one of the founding partners of R-PLUS, has invited the students to bring their ideas to a public hearing on the future of the Rockland Psych lands, to be held in January at Orangetown Town Hall. Stewart said, "I encourage these kids, along with their parents and teachers, to join us in Town Hall as we envision a great mix of open space, commercial and residential development on the Town's 350 acres of former state land."

This valuable and exciting program is now in its eighth year. It is a collaboration between Columbia University Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (Margie Turrin), Keep Rockland Beautiful (Sonia Cairo), Rockland AmeriCorps (Kathy Galione), and SUNY Rockland Community College.

This program is made possible with the support of Frank & Joanne Gumper, HSBC Bank U.S.A., N.A., and First Niagara Bank Foundation.

For more information on the program, please visit: <http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/plus>

Event Details:

8:30 – 9:15 AM: OPENING REMARKS & MENTOR INTRODUCTIONS -Ellipse Lobby, Tech Bldg.

9:20 - 9:50 AM: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS TO MENTORS - Student Union, 3114 & 3214

Groups of 8 – 10 students from each school will give a presentation of their redevelopment plan for their chosen local site to several mentors. Mentors will work with the students to help them think more completely about their proposed project and how to build a strong integrated plan that considers the economic, environmental and social benefits and impacts. Students will be collecting feedback on the items the mentors found as strengths with their projects, as well as suggestions on improvements.

10:00 - 10:15: Coffee and breakfast snack - Ellipse Lobby, Tech Bldg.

10:20 - 10:45: INTRO: ROCKLAND PSYCHIATRIC CENTER - Ellipse Room, Tech Bldg.

Overview of Rockland Psych Center property and collaborative mapping orientation. Regroup for new planning activity. Introduction of additional mentors joining the mapping session.

10:55 - 12:00: COLLABORATIVE MAPPING - Student Union, 3214 & 3114

Schools will be divided into mixed school groups to work together on this newly introduced project. Mentors will observe and offer insights and feedback.

12:10 - 12:40: LUNCH - Faculty Lounge & Student Cafeteria, Cultural Arts

12:50 - 1:20: FINAL STUDENT PRESENTATIONS - Ellipse Room, Tech Bldg.

Students will provide highlights from their Rockland Psych planning projects and receive feedback from mentors.

Community Mentors & Facilitors include:

Paul	Adler	Rand Commercial Services
Nancy	Antonucci	Blauvelt Action Group
Naomi	Camilleri	Rockland Farm Alliance
Harriet	Cornell	Rockland County Legislature
Ray	Cywinski	United Water
Jan	Degenshein	Degenshein Architects
Ira	Emanuel	Emanuel Law Office
Chuck	Frankel	Rockland Municipal Planning Federation
Mary	Hegarty	Rockland County Division of Environmental Resources
Susan	Hereth	Scenic Hudson
George	Hoehmann	Town of Clarkstown
Helen	Kenny Burrows	Rockland County Department of Planning
Thom	Kleiner	NYS Department of Labor (former Orangetown Supervisor)
Arlene	Miller	Rockland County Department of Planning
Phyllis	Morena	Rockland County Youth Bureau
George	Potanovic, Jr.	S.P.A.C.E. (Stony Point Action Committee for the Environment)
Shannon	Purdy	U.S. Department of Transportation
Cathy	Quinn	Rockland County Department of Health
Betsy	Rodman	Rockland County AmeriCorps
Andrew	Stewart	Town of Orangetown
Sarah	Tucker	First Niagara Bank
Christopher	Travela, Ph.D.	Rockland Psychiatric Center
Don	Wanamaker	Environmental Management Limited
Emily	Vail	Hudson River Estuary Program
Geoff	Welch	Ramapo River Watershed Keeper

For more information, please contact:

Sonia Cairo, Executive Director, Keep Rockland Beautiful
sonia@keeprocklandbeautiful.org, 845-708-9164; cell 845-893-5421

or

Margie Turrin, Education Coordinator, Columbia University Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
mkt@ldeo.columbia.edu, 845-365-8494; cell 845-729-8535