

Why Young Americans Avoid Involvement In Politics

By Gabriel Howard, Staff Writer / Stroudsburg Mountaineer

STROUDSBURG - You can't escape politics, yet a lot more students seem to be doing so each day.

Whether students hear about something happening in our government briefly in the news, or a teacher dedicates an entire class period to discussing issues with students, politics continue to change the shape of America and the rest of the world.

Politics have evolved and changed from decade to decade, but none has been more controversial than politics since the 2016 presidential election. Despite the fact that scandals, debates, and more have become part of America's daily discourse from the barber shop to the courthouse, most students (in high school and college) and adults still tend to avoid the whole mess.

Today I ask a simple question: "Why?" Why are many people becoming less involved?

The answer is a bit more obvious than you may think. According to Yes! Magazine, the main reasons young people turn away politics are apathy, disengagement and hopelessness. These come from upcoming responsibilities they are beginning to face, as well as their emotional status.

For instance, students feel pressure just coping with real, daily problems, such as loan debts from college and the desire to do well to earn a good living. Others, since childhood, have experiences nihilism and a general sense of dread for the future of our country; an example of this is of the global climate change, with an estimated 52% of Americans beyond anxious about the negative impact we are having on mother earth.

"I believe that one of the reasons why there is an apathy in students, both at the high school and college levels, is a lack of understanding of the importance of politics," Sergio Butron states. "I believe that many people don't fully understand how impactful it is to participate in government and politics – even if it is as simple as merely voting."

Some students add other causes to the mix.

"I think that more students are involved than they ever have been," senior Josh Birnbaum stated. "The only reason why some aren't is because they most likely don't have access to social media. Social media is one of the most powerful tools to get updated on politics. If someone doesn't have access to social media, then they most likely don't care for politics."

Let's take a look at some statistics. According to the website "Gallup", 82 percent of people (age 65 and up) have an interest in voting and politics, whereas 26 percent of people (under 30 years of age) are not interested. The radical shift in percentages affirms that more older folk from eras like the "Boomer" era and the turn of the new millennium (I.E. shifting from the 80s-90s to the 2000s) are determining the outcome of political decisions.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are some students who support political movements.

"I'm crazy about politics," said sophomore Daisy Simons. "The reason why our generation is less interested in politics is because we have a more liberal society. We have more genders and more options; the way you were raised affects your political position."

My parents are both in the educational business. Both of them work around the clock to provide an education to children who have parents that are affected by political choices, like the government shutdown.

They are constantly tuning in to the news every night on stations like NBC. They even discuss with me the rationale behind their political decisions and choices. "The reason I think high school students are not very politically involved," my father, Justin says, "is because the issues that the President and other politicians talk about do not affect most 15 to 18 year olds."

My mother has a different outlook and experience during her senior year in high school. "The years I was in high school," my mom, Spiri, says, "many historical, political events happened. One that I was most in tuned to was the destruction of the Berlin Wall." For those who do not know, during the Cold War, the Communist party and their leader, Nikita Khrushchev, built the Berlin Wall to split the country of Germany in two. She was one of the many students in



school who watched the toppling of the wall on national TV, saying "I was elated that this wall came down and that these people were now able to enjoy the same freedom as I was enjoying."

I compare politics to something like a spider's web – when someone lands in the web, and start digging around into what politics are really involved, they become ensnared and trapped. The public becomes tangled in drama, media coverage that may not be true or fake news, and other factors like general misguidance and public opinion.

In my eyes, we are becoming more indifferent to the politics as a result of misguidance, misinformation, and opinions that are muddying the waters.

To bring this discussion back around, how can we improve this problem? How can we engage more and more students, to make them more attentive to day-to-day politics?

I would say that the biggest thing a person could do is to stay well informed. With fake news and media on the rise, it is important for all individuals to do some research into biased television news stations. The more well-informed the public is with the facts about our political stance, the less likely they will be in a biased viewpoint.

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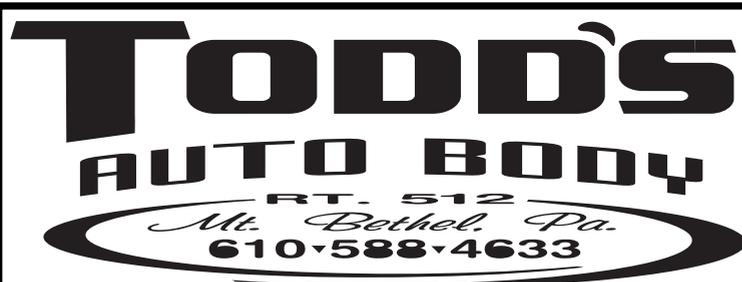
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Free Training for General Contractors on Lead Abatement Certification

By Bethlehem, Easton, and Northampton County (BEN)

EASTON - The Bethlehem, Easton, and Northampton County (BEN) Lead Coalition is providing FREE lead abatement training to contractors and associated individuals interested in learning how to safely remove lead paint from residential structures. Training is available to established contractors and their staff who would like to participate in BEN Lead Coalition projects within Northampton County.

Why become certified: The grant requires that 50+ homes must be remediated by the end of the year. Only contractors and their employees who have completed the certification training are eligible to complete the projects. Certified contractors will also be placed on a list of county approved vendors. All participants successfully completing the program, will be eligible to attend additional safety training at no cost to obtain their 10 hour OSHA Construction Outreach Training Card (a savings of \$150).

Project goal: To ensure all lead-based paint abatement projects have the necessary trained personnel, so our residents are protected from lead-based paint hazards. All programs meet the requirements of

the Commonwealth of PA, Dept. of Labor & Industry's Lead Based Paint Occupation Accreditation and

Certification Regulations, Section 203.3 as well as the EPA's requirements in 40 CFR, Part 745.

Want to learn more? Join us for a FREE information session to discuss the program and how it can benefit your business.

Lead Paint Information Session

Thurs., Feb. 28 (Snow date: March 7), 5:30pm

Fowler Family Southside Center, Room 114

511 E. Third St., Bethlehem, PA 18015

Visit northampton.edu/LeadPaint to enroll

Spring 2019 programs:

Program Dates Day(s) Time Campus

Supervisor Training Mar. 25-29 Mon. - Fri. 8am-5pm Fowler Family Southside Center

Initial Worker Training* Apr. 3-5 Weds. - Fri. 8am-5pm Fowler Family Southside Center

*Includes RRP Refresher Course which will be taught by EnviroEd, LLC. All other Lead Abatement courses will be taught by the City of Bethlehem, a PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Accredited Training Provider (Initial accreditation number 043; Supervisor accreditation pending).

How to enroll: Please visit northampton.edu/LeadPaint to enroll online. Program attendance is limited to 24 participants. However, in order to run the program, we must have a minimum of five participants.

Participants who register after the cap is met will be placed on a wait list and notified first when the next session is opened for registration. For questions, call 610-332-6596 or e-mail safety@northampton.edu.

U.s. Senate Votes To Renew Land & Water Conservation Fund

By Jessica Bellwoar, Conservation Associate

PHILADELPHIA - America's most successful conservation program that protected Gettysburg, Valley Forge, and Flight 93 Memorial, has new life.

The U.S. Senate passed a public lands package on Tuesday Feb. 12th that permanently reauthorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a historically bipartisan program that has funded projects in every Pennsylvania county and in all 50 states since its inception in 1965. The program, which expired last September, has supported everything from the expansion and maintenance of local parks and recreation centers to national forests, national parks and historical sites.

In Pennsylvania, LWCF has helped fund the creation and maintenance of more than 1,500 projects investing more than \$315 million in the Commonwealth.

"Pennsylvanians want our parks, forests and recreational places to stay beautiful and well-funded," said Jessica Bellwoar, Conservation Associate for PennEnvironment. "Thankfully we're seeing movement on reviving this program, and we applaud the U.S. Senate for getting the job done and not letting it fall through the cracks."

Since LWCF funding expired, public lands projects have lost more than \$300 million in revenue. While the Senate bill that passed yesterday permanently renews the program, it does not fully fund the program at the initial \$900 million a year levels.

While the vote passed 92-8, sadly, Pennsylvania's Senator Pat Toomey was one of the only senators to oppose renewing the program. PennEnvironment applauded U.S. Senator Bob Casey for his longstanding support of LWCF and voting in favor of the proposal.

During the months leading up to and after the program expired, PennEnvironment collected over 5,000 petitions calling on Senators Casey and Toomey, and Pennsylvania's congressional delegation to permanently reauthorize the program.