

Contest Winners will be Announced & Awarded at 11am

1st Annual Recycled Art Contest

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION & ART SHOW



WM's GRAND CENTRAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

APRIL 15
10AM - 12PM
rain or shine

FREE EVENT

Food, Activities, Games and Prizes!
Bird & Bee (NEW) Program Demonstrations!!

Recycled artwork designed by students from Pen Argyl & Bangor Area School Districts will be on display for public viewing!

Contact Adrienne to learn more
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1.888.373.2917

WM 

Environment Education Center: 891 Grand Central Rd., Pen Argyl 18072

Pa Has A Growing Crisis: Recruitment, Retention Of Police Officers

By David Kennedy / Pennsylvania State Troopers Association

PA - As Pennsylvania families gather around their dinner tables, I hope they'll say a small prayer for the three Pennsylvania police officers we've already lost this year: Brackenridge Police Chief Justin McIntire, McKeesport Police Officer Sean Sluganski and Temple University Officer Christopher Fitzgerald.

Chief McIntire and Officers Sluganski and Fitzgerald made the ultimate sacrifice. They are heroes. It's in their memory that I hope state lawmakers can come together to help law enforcement do their jobs safely – and return home to their families. That means giving them more backup.

Right now, the biggest issue law enforcement faces is the recruitment and retention of good police officers. Departments across Pennsylvania, and America, are suffering from some of their lowest numbers ever.

In 2019, before the pandemic, police recruitment in the United States was already dire. So dire, in fact, that the International Association of Chiefs of Police termed it, "a crisis for law enforcement." IACP noted that despite an increase in the raw number of law enforcement jobs, overall population growth has actually led to a decline in the ratio of residents to police officers.

Staffing problems became even more acute in 2020 with the pandemic and later fallout from the murder of George Floyd. COVID-19 claimed the lives of 900 officers nationwide, and the riots following the events in Minneapolis gave rise to the "Defund the Police" movement. This made our jobs more dangerous and led to an exodus, known as The Great Resignation. The resignation rate in 2020-21 increased by 18% and the retirement rate rose by 45%, according to a survey conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum.

Here in the commonwealth, Pennsylvania police departments and the Pennsylvania State Police have not been immune. Things have gotten so bad that then Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro initiated a "hero-pay" retention bonus program for police officers who work in short-staffed departments.

When you add in the effects of an economic recession with high inflation, salaries paid to police officers simply don't go as far as they did – making recruitment even more challenging.

What does all of this mean?

Police staffing is no longer a crisis; it is a full-scale catastrophe. We simply don't have enough officers to protect the citizens of this commonwealth. That's the truth. If it's one thing a criminal knows – it's a numbers advantage, and they know our officers are spread far too thin. The result: Increased crime and violence is taking place all across Pennsylvania.

Here's an example of how bad recruitment is suffering at the Pennsylvania State Police.

When I signed up in 1995, I competed for a position with 10,000 applicants. Let me say that again, I had to compete with 10,000 applicants to become a State Trooper.

Last year? The Pennsylvania State Police had only 1,000 applicants. Let me say that again, last year, the Pennsylvania State Police had only 1,000 applicants.

Despite this, our duties as troopers haven't decreased. In fact, it's just the opposite.

Local municipal police departments continue to cease operations, leaving our department with the sole responsibility of covering those jurisdictions. We're now responsible for over 85% of Pennsylvania's land mass. Troopers also provide patrol duties in the cities of Chester and Philadelphia. And every time a new program is initiated by state or federal authorities, the State Police is charged with implementing it without additional funding.

The PSTA believes there are legislative steps that can be taken to enhance public safety for all residents of the commonwealth. One item that can and should be done quickly is a dedicated funding stream for our department in the next state budget.

We must recognize the first duty of government is the safety of its citizens. With dedicated funding, our department can address many of the issues I've laid out here related to trooper recruitment and retention. It also would ensure we have the training in place to protect Pennsylvanians.

We are in constant training as state troopers, and the costs are only rising as more training is included. For example, since only November, I've received training for: Contact Data Reporting; Emergency Awareness; the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Assistance Network (or CLEAN); and cyber security.

For the record, we support more training for our troopers. As we like to say, in a little over a century, training has helped the Pennsylvania State Police make the transition from horseback to helicopter.

Let's address this growing catastrophe and increased violence head-on. A good start is to directly fund a line item in the state budget for the Pennsylvania State Police, so we have the backup and resources to accomplish our ever-growing mission.



Endemic Watershed Connections: Place. Preservation. Restoration.

MARCH 14TH, 2023
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY, BETHLEHEM PA 

Indigenous Perspectives:

The Rappahannock Cultural Landscape - Using Archeology in Land Conservation Planning
Dr. Julia King, Professor of Anthropology, St. Mary's College of Maryland

A partnership initiative of the Rappahannock Tribe and St. Mary's College of Maryland to identify and prioritize lands for conservation,

Contemporary American Indians 101
Sean Daley, Director, Institute for Indigenous Studies, Lehigh Univ.

A panel presentation and discussion introducing issues that Indian peoples and their communities face today.

Constructed Ceremonial Landscapes of the Middle Atlantic
Dr. Julia King, Professor of Anthropology, St. Mary's College of Maryland

Indigenous ceremonial landscapes in the Middle Atlantic region and the challenges of identifying and protecting these landscapes.

TO REGISTER: www.watershedcoalitionlv.org

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CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS:
Watershed Coalition of the Lehigh Valley • Penn State Extension
Northampton County Parks and Recreation • Nurture Nature Center
Northampton County Conservation District • Lehigh University
Environmental Initiative • Lehigh University Institute for Indigenous Studies

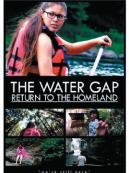
THE NURTURE NATURE CENTER **NINTH LEHIGH VALLEY WATERSHED CONFERENCE**
Special Public Programming at the Nurture Nature Center, Easton, PA www.nurturenaturecenter.org

The Water Gap: Return to the Homeland
Film screening and presentation from filmmaker and cast.
Sunday, March 12th, 1pm - 3pm

In 2016, Choctaw filmmaker, Kyle Kauwika Harris documented the experiences of 14 youth from three Lenape nations who spent time immersed in their ancestral homeland in the Delaware River Watershed in this award-winning documentary. Kyle and several of the Delaware youth from the 2016 film, who are now young Delaware adults from Anadarko, Oklahoma, will share what it was like, as teenagers from the Midwest, to spend time, for the first time in their lives, in their ancestral homeland in the Eastern Woodlands, and how that experience has affected them to this day. Sponsored by Native Hope and the Institute for Indigenous Studies, Lehigh University.

Presentation: Ceremonial Landscapes of the Middle Atlantic
Monday, March 13th, 7pm
Dr. Julia King, Professor of Anthropology, St. Mary's College of Maryland

A presentation Indigenous ceremonial landscapes in the Middle Atlantic region and the challenges of identifying and protecting these landscapes. This presentation is sponsored by New England Antiquities Research Association.

NATIVE HOPE **NURTURE NATURE CENTER, 518 Northampton St., Easton PA 18042**