

MP's REPORT: Engaging youth in our community and across our country

By Leona Alleslev, MP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

February is Youth Achievement Month, and our young people are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but they are often the leaders of today when they are given the support and opportunities that help them to succeed. Youth engagement is a priority not only for our government, but for me personally, as your Member of Parliament. In honour of Youth Achievement month and to celebrate our local future leaders, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you how the youth in our community are engaging as citizens and to highlight some of the investments our government is making in our youth.

The Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill Constituency Youth Council

I'm proud to announce that the Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill Constituency Youth Council (CYC) is back for its second year, and we have a fantastic group of young leaders! The CYC meets with me regularly to discuss important federal issues facing our nation and to provide their perspectives on how national issues such as employment, access to education, building stronger communities, climate change, innovation, and clean growth should be addressed to shape Canada for the future. These 16 youth from 15-25 years of age are highly engaged and active not only in our CYC but in many other activities in the community ? be sure to look out for them at our future events.

Visiting Richmond Green Secondary School

In January, I had the opportunity to meet with students from the Grade 10 Civics classes at Richmond Green Secondary School to discuss my role as a Member of Parliament. We had an engaging discussion about the importance of the federal government, the work of an MP in the riding as well as in Ottawa, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the process of shaping government policy and becoming a federal candidate. Thank you to the students, Ms. Niedzielska and Principal Richard Cherry for allowing me to participate with you in this important conversation!

Meeting with 1st and 2nd Pathfinders of Oak Ridges

A few weeks ago, I met with the 1st and 2nd Pathfinders of Oak Ridges. The Pathfinders program is an opportunity for girls across Canada to develop leadership skills, and the Oak Ridges Pathfinders are currently completing their citizenship module to receive their citizenship badge. I spoke with them about my role not only as a Member of Parliament but also as a member of the Canadian Forces, the importance of service to country and the many forms it can take, and the rights and responsibilities of being a good citizen.

Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Program ? Applications due Feb 8, 2018

Last summer, over 65,000 students across Canada gained valuable work experience through the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program. In Aurora?Oak Ridges?Richmond Hill, our government invested over \$600,000 through the CSJ ? which allowed businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations across our community to create 222 student jobs. On January 10, my office hosted an information session for employers who were interested in applying for Federal funding to hire a student this summer. Canada Summer Jobs gives youth the tools they'll need to succeed in their future careers ? including meaningful work experience. If you are an employer that would like to apply please contact our office as applications are due February 2, 2018.

CanCODE

In January, our government launched the CanCODE program to provide young Canadians with digital skills for the jobs of the future. Through this program almost one million Canadian students from kindergarten to Grade 12 will have the opportunity to learn coding and digital skills. This program will also provide over 63,000 teachers across Canada with tools and training to teach coding. This investment will allow more Canadians to compete in the digital world.

If you would like more information on these or other programs, or if there is a youth group in our community that you would like me

to meet, please contact my office! Email: Leona.Alleslev@parl.gc.ca. Phone: 905-773-8358. Office: 12820 Yonge St., Suite 202, Richmond Hill.