

What is Community Conversations?

Community Conversations is comprised of a group of diverse stakeholders that use the resources and network to create a stronger social fabric in our town for the betterment of individuals and community. Our first series of events for 2019 is called: Turning the Pages of Hillsborough, where we will host three events and focus on topics that connect us all. The first is about our history, the second on our passion and finally in December we will focus on our our faith. Our events are meant to create a stronger sense of community within our town. We would love to invite more people to our brainstorming and grass roots meetings. To get involved, please email: peeps@hillsboroughcommons.org for more information or go to hillsboroughcommons.org to see the real time progress and impact of our events.

Turning the Pages of Hillsborough: Part 2 What I Do and Why September 28, 2019

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Saturday, 2:00 PM-5:00 PM

Hillsborough Public Library

We will be hearing from all ages about inspiring youth, adults, and retirees presenting on finding and exploring their passion. Selected speakers will include inspiring stories such as "Why Community Matters", and "Why Libraries can make a difference". Our guest speakers will include TED speaker, Priya Vulchi and the executive director of Safe & Sound.

Turning the Pages of Hillsborough: Part 3 Celebration of Our Shared Holidays December 7, 2019

Saturday 2:00 PM-5:00 PM

Hillsborough Public Library

Spirituality and celebration of faith come together to learn about various religions and faith traditions, as well as see the oneness that ties us all together. We will be inviting organizations to showcase 10-12 minutes each of what their traditions are, how they celebrate, and learning how we are all connected.

Turning the Pages of Hillsborough Where do we come from? Program

Saturday June 1, 2019 2:00 - 5:00

Learning about our roots

2:00

Introduction

Michele Boronkas

A moment with our MC's

Gabriella Diaz & Jordan Gale

What history could be

Beverly Mills & Elaine Buck

Discussion: interactive

Nishat Ruiter

Break

3:15

What our history tells us

3:30

Learning from historians from HHS

Scott Kallens and his students

A moment with our MC's

Gabriella Diaz & Jordan Gale

Taking change by the hand

TED-Ed member Emilie Scholma

Cages and coffins

TED-Ed member Kiley Chen

Building social fabric

4:15

What building social fabric looks like

Isabella Ruiter

Discussion: interactive

Michele Boronkas and Isabella Ruiter

A closing moment with our MC's

Gabriella Diaz & Jordan Gale

screenplay by Eric Craft

"A little bop" composed by: Gabe Parsons

Connecting and building our social fabric: one neighbor at a time...

(Turn the page to learn about the speakers and participants and flip the program for more information about our next event!)

Michele Boronkas is the Executive Director of Safe + Sound Somerset. She is a passionate team-oriented leader with an exceptional ability to motivate decision makers at all levels. Her focus is creating measurable impactful results through strategic partnerships and community engagement. Michele has held leadership positions with the United Way, American Cancer Society and executive policy positions within county and state government. She has a Master's Degree in Social Work from Marywood University, with a focus on policy, organizational and program development. In addition, Michele is an avid student of meditation, a certified yoga instructor and a lover of live music. She lives in Hillsborough with her husband and teenage son.

Gabriella Diaz is a Junior at Hillsborough High School where she is a Peer Mentor and the current National Art Honor Society Public Relations officer, as well as a member of the Gender-Sexuality Alliance, Sources of Strength Suicide Prevention Club, Diversity Club, and more. Outside of school, her heart is devoted to cinematic and photographic arts as well as political activism and social empowerment. Her favorite thing about Hillsborough is exploring the forest areas on her bike.

Jordan Gale is a senior at Hillsborough High School. He will be attending Fairfield University this fall, and he is looking to continue to follow his passion for leadership and volunteerism in college. Jordan is a peer mentor at the high school, and he commonly works with students with disabilities through clubs and art programs. Outside of school, he is an avid golfer, and loves spending time with friends and family.

Nishat Ruiter is a mother of two teenagers in Hillsborough, a grassroots organizer, member of the Hillsborough Township Library Advisory Board and currently working as General Counsel at TED Conferences in NYC. In addition to co-hosting Spiritual Cafes and study classes with her husband Pieter at her home, she enjoys walking in Duke Farms and eating mint ice cream at Rita's.

Authors Sharon Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills

Sharon Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills are founders of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum and members on the Advisory Board. They co-authored "If These Stones Could Talk" which is based on over a decade's worth of research on the contribution of African Americans who lived in the Sourland Mountain region and surrounding area. They are also co-founders of Friday Truehart Consultants which is a consulting company that works closely with K-12 educators from various school systems who are interested in including African American history in their lesson plans and curriculum.

Elaine Buck has also served for numerous years as the Church Clerk for the Second Calvary Baptist Church in Hopewell, New Jersey. She has been married to John Buck for over forty years and is the mother of two adult sons, Aaron and Jason. She is the third generation to live in her home in Hopewell Borough.

Beverly Mills is a retiree as the Director for the Workforce Development Board in Mercer County, New Jersey and is the first African American woman to hold the elected position as a Councilwoman in Pennington Borough, NJ. Beverly currently lives in her ancestral home in Pennington, New Jersey (which has been in her family since 1911) with her husband Robert Mills to whom she has been married for forty-six years. She is also the mother of two adult sons, Jason and Drew and the grandmother of five.

Scott Kallens is known among his students to be a dynamic and compelling Hillsborough High School social studies teacher (though he probably won't admit it), with 15 years of experience, a Masters of Arts from Fairleigh Dickenson, and an advocate of improving teaching techniques in an original and unique way. He also is engaged in strategic planning and spearheading district efforts to re-imagine final exams as long-term, authentic learning experiences for students. Most recently, Mr. Kallens's sophomore students have begun developing a story collection archive called Hillsborough, Through Our Eyes, in an effort to preserve and connect Hillsborough's residents while building a cultural understanding that everyone's story has value. Mr. Kallens makes his home in Stockton, NJ along with his spouse Kelli, also an educator, their son James and their five pets.

Emilie Scholma is a sophomore at HHS who enjoys horseback riding and baking. her favorite thing to do in Hillsborough is go to the library because she LOVES to read.

Kiley Chen is a sophomore at HHS and a member of the TED Ed Club. Her favorite thing to do in Hillsborough is to take walks through Ann Van park and take photos of nature and wildlife.

Isabella Ruiter is a senior at Hillsborough High School where she has been involved as a peer mentor, hosted youth gatherings and facilitated a spiritual empowerment youth group called Compass Club. After graduation, she will serve at the Baha'i World Center in Haifa Israel for a gap year and then will attend Rutgers University where she will study History.