

## Port Chester Teens Meet Police Up Close, Personal: Learn All Lives Matter



Jon Craig

[Facebook @joncraigdv](#) [Email me](#) [Read More Stories](#)



Nicole Hernandez, left, and Melanie Blackburn display "norms" -- or rules -- agreed on with their peers including "be on time," "come sober" and "no electronics" during class. Photo Credit: *Jon Craig*



Jim Isenberg, executive director of the North American Family Institute in New York, speaks to a group of Port Chester teenagers. Port Chester Police Chief Richard Conway, at right, also spoke to the high school students on Friday. Photo Credit: *Jon Craig*



Port Chester High students were congratulated by state Assemblyman Steve Otis, center, and state Sen. George Latimer, right. Photo Credit: *Jon Craig*

This story has been updated.

PORT CHESTER, N.Y. -- Fourteen high school teenagers spent their afternoons with Port Chester police last week, but nobody was in trouble.

To their amazement, the youths discovered that the local police officers they met had grown up as teenagers with uncertain futures, too.

It was part of a [Youth & Police Initiative \(YPI\)](http://www.nafi.com/innovations/youth-and-police-initiative/) (<http://www.nafi.com/innovations/youth-and-police-initiative/>) leadership training program funded by the Westchester County Department of Social Services and led by [the North American Family Institute, which has offices in Elmsford.](http://www.nafiny.org/nafinfi/) (<http://www.nafiny.org/nafinfi/>)

The sessions gave students a chance to talk about life lessons and aspirations and hear from police officers about their own life struggles and success stories. The goal is simple, NAFI says on its web site: "Provide young people with critical life skills and foster a desire for a successful future."

On Friday afternoon, Port Chester Police Chief Richard Conway was a guest speaker. Conway talked about a college football teammate named Chris who has become the most decorated officer in the New York Police Department. It's not someone's size or muscle that matters, Conway told the group: "It's the size of your heart that will get you somewhere in life."

State Sen. George Latimer described growing up on the south side of Mount Vernon and being written off as someone who would never go anywhere in life.

"You matter as an individual," Latimer said. "You can overcome these barriers. . . by who you are inside. The people in this room have confidence in you."

Discussions were led by a facilitator from the [North American Family Institute](http://www.nafi.com). (<http://www.nafi.com>) a private nonprofit human service agency specializing in community-based care for children, youth and adults with emotional and/or behavioral problems.

NAFI facilitator Charles Morgan said, "This group shared tenacity. You persevered. You were very eager to become leaders."

The teenagers nodded in agreement.

Several teens said the experience left them seeing police as human beings. A couple of them said they now want to get more active in community programs or apply for summer internships at the police department.

Another major partner in this initiative, in addition to NAFI and the Port Chester Police Department, was [Port Chester Cares \(PCC\)](http://www.portchestercares.org/index.html). (<http://www.portchestercares.org/index.html>) Jim Isenberg, executive director of the North American Family Institute in New York, said, "They were vital to this program taking place."

PCC Director Alex Payan spearheaded the operational logistics of the program, according to Isenberg. Payan recruited the students, secured the training site and food, and worked closely with Chief Conway, Isenberg said.

Port Chester's program offered two teen sessions this month and has been bringing youths and police officers together for eight years.

Conway said the youths who participated will be invited to other events, such as trips to Bear Mountain and Manhattan.

Port Chester police who spoke to the group last week included: Capt. Chris Rosabella, Lt. Charles Nielsen, Lt. Robert Salerno and Police Officers Michael Giandurco, Matt Chalmers, Melissa Rosario and Kevin Munnely.

Since 1974, NAFI has provided programming and services designed around the "Normative Community Approach," which emphasizes the ability of all people to achieve positive change when they are members of a community united in mission and purpose. "Together, we empower individuals to maximize their independence and succeed in the future," NAFI says on its web site.



Follow [Jon Craig](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)  
[lifestyle](#) 12/25/2016

## Nosh On This: Port Chester Kosher Caterer Serves Up Chanukah Potato Latkes



[Jeanne Muchnick](#)  
[Facebook @jmuchnickdv](#) [Email me](#) [Read More Stories](#)



Avril Kaye of Port Chester-based Avril Kaye Caterers with her tried and tested potato latkes. Photo Credit: *Submitted*

PORT CHESTER, N.Y. -- Chanukah begins Saturday, Dec. 24 and continues through Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017. Make it easy on yourself with a tried and tested potato latke recipe courtesy of Port Chester-based [Avril Kay Caterers/Event Planners](http://www.avrilkaye.com/) (<http://www.avrilkaye.com/>), which specializes in kosher events.

### Potato Latkes

#### Ingredients

- 5 medium to large potatoes
- 1 onion
- 3 cups flour
- 3 extra large eggs
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- canola oil – for frying

#### Method

- Peel and shred potatoes (squeeze out all excess water).
- Add lemon juice and mix well (prevents potatoes from turning brown).
- Add finely chopped onion.
- Mix in three beaten eggs.
- Add ½ teaspoon salt.
- Add ¼ teaspoon pepper.
- Mix in three cups flour in batches (if batter is a little loose add more flour slowly until latkes hold their shape).
- Heat canola oil in a large frypan (oil should be at least ½" deep at all times).
- Form latkes 2" in diameter and ½" thick
- Fry on each side until golden brown (cooked through).
- Drain well on brown paper.
- Serve with applesauce.



Follow [Jeanne Muchnick](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Welcome to

## Port Chester Daily Voice!

This is a one time message inviting you to keep in touch

**Get important news about your town as it happens.**