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Nassau County Comptroller and Hofstra University Host First-Ever Policy Hackathon and Innovation Awards

Students pitched public policy solutions to issues highlighted in Next Gen Report and Comptroller's Office honors local leaders for promoting innovation.

HEMPSTEAD, NY – The Office of the Nassau County Comptroller and Hofstra University partnered to host the first-ever Policy Hackathon and Innovation Awards at the Hofstra University IdeaHub. The event included a student-led Hackathon and the presentation of Innovation Awards from the County Comptroller's Office to recognize and acknowledge leaders that have made significant contributions to Nassau County.

Public policy students from Hofstra University, including the Peter S. Kalikow School of Government, led teams, including guest high school students, to develop solutions to the policy question: "In light of Nassau's changing demographics, how can policymakers ensure Nassau County's economy remains competitive over the next decade?" Students developed pitch presentations with public policy solutions to address issues highlighted in the Comptroller's Office Policy and Research Unit's report: [The Deal for the Next Generation](#). Judges from Hofstra University, NextLI, the Association for a Better Long Island, and Bethpage Federal Credit Union graded the pitches focusing on affordable housing, college debt, and transit-oriented development, and awarded a \$500 prize.

"The Policy Hackathon and Innovation Awards was designed to not only celebrate the achievements of many within our community who have promoted innovation, but to foster the development of innovative ideas from future leaders," said **Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman**. "The Hofstra IdeaHub is the ideal location to host an event focused on solutions that will help support the next generation in Nassau as well as our local economy. Students proposed their own solutions to regional problems impacting the next generation directly to stakeholders working to make an impact and support the future of the County's economy and workforce."

"The training methodology used by the Center for Entrepreneurship for new innovations can be applied to any setting – startup, corporate, or even government," said **Stacey Sikes, Executive Dean of Entrepreneurship and Business Development at the Hofstra University Center for**

Entrepreneurship. “The Policy Hackathon and Innovation Awards is a great exercise for students who are interested in creating new public policies, and I thank the Nassau County Comptroller’s office for their collaboration and Bethpage Federal Credit Union for sponsoring this event.”

Additionally, five Innovation Awards were presented at the event to recognize significant contributions to Nassau County. The **Town of North Hempstead** was recognized for its transparency initiatives and trailblazing 3-1-1 service; **Urban League of Long Island** for its work to ensure economic equity; **Health and Welfare Council of Long Island** for its work related to the upcoming 2020 Census; **Nassau BOCES** for its innovative shared services work and programs for learners of all ages; and **NextLI** for its recent policy work to help support the next generation on Long Island.

“The Policy Hackathon bridges academic study and policy practice well by encouraging students to develop proposals based on group research and analysis. Innovative workshops like this one are essential professional preparation in the twenty-first century for students who seek to pursue careers in policy making,” said **Dr. Meena Bose, Executive Dean for Public Policy and Public Service Programs, Peter S. Kalikow School of Government, Public Policy and International Affairs.**

“This event was a great opportunity to see young people presenting solutions to an audience filled with key stakeholders within our community,” **Schnirman added.** “Events like this bridge the gap between the present and future, and it shows there is much to look forward to in Nassau County in the years to come.”

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