



## EYECOM: Youth Activists and the Environment

By Stephen Brody, Science Interchange Reporter

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The Environmental Youth Education Council of Marin (EYECOM) is a group of students who want to raise environmental awareness among their peers. Despite a few setbacks, the group is looking forward to doing exciting projects with local teen environmentalists.

Co-founded by senior Anno Davis, senior Briana Gladstone and junior Elena Mihaly, it originated as an idea for Davis' Academy X Senior Project. When Davis decided the project might yield better results with a mentor to help guide her through the process, she signed up to intern at the Environmental Education Council of Marin (EECoM). She put the plan into action along with her fellow founders and her mentor, Sandy Wallenstein, and formed EYECOM as a subsidiary project of EECoM.

EYECOM now meets at City Hall at The Mall at Northgate because district policy states that students from other schools cannot be on Drake High School campus unless they are supervised by a staff member. According to Davis, finding a meeting place was just one small hurdle that stood in the way of EYECOM.

Drake's Assistant Principal Daniel Norbutas said, "We've brought the issue up many times at staff meetings and because we do support the cause of the council. We tried to recommend alternative meeting places for them as well... . These projects are incredibly valuable endeavors and worthy causes."

Davis said she hopes the council will have an enduring impact on the community. "We want this to be a lasting council to connect to as many Marin high schools as we possibly can," she said. "We want students of Marin to be able to come together to work with each other on environmental issues they think need to be addressed. There is a lot of environmental concern among Marin youth, but not many know how to channel it into change. We're hoping to give them a place to do that." Among the other high schools from which members hail are Redwood, San Andreas and Marin Catholic.

EYECOM plans to meet every three weeks, depending on space availability. Thus far, the council has not undertaken any projects and is focusing its attention on getting its peers involved. Davis admits the group has been moving slowly, but says she is optimistic about the council's future. "In general, people who hear about it are really enthusiastic and think it's a great idea. Even if they themselves are not involved, they think other people should be," she said.

The council's first project is designed to raise environmental awareness. The council plans to compile shocking facts about the environment onto posters and fliers. They hope that the posters will grab students' attention and make them think twice about their actions, and possibly interest some in joining the council. The posters are going to be printed on recycled paper.

Possible future projects include trail restoration, addressing ocean pollution, educating elementary school students, and campaigning against the U.S. Navy's sonar testing that scientists say may be harming whales.

## RESOURCES

Any students, parents, teachers or staff interested in supporting the council may call 485-4908 or email [go\\_EYECOM@yahoo.com](mailto:go_EYECOM@yahoo.com)