

Dear MSYPs,

As ever, it's been a busy month for the Scottish Youth Parliament! Lots of training, campaigning and representing going on in July as always, if you have any comments or suggestions to make please get in touch with me via Facebook, Twitter (@raecahill) or email (rae.cahill.msyp@sypmail.org.uk).

On 11th July, myself and Eilidh Still MSYP for Edinburgh South attended the 34th World Association of Girl Scouts and Girl Guides World Conference in Edinburgh. It was a fantastic event and great opportunity to promote the SYP and the work which we do.

Love Equally Campaign

Monday saw the launch of our Love Equally campaign at the Scottish Parliament. The press and public were invited to a mock wedding reception, where two same-sex couples and one mixed-sex couples were made up of MSYPs Terri Miller, Jordan Linden, Grant Costello, Dariush Saheli, Eilidh Still, and Kelley Temple. They were 'wed' with special guests including Patrick Harvie MSP and Marco Biagi MSP. To read up on the campaign and sign/distribute the petition, click here; <http://www.syp.org.uk/love-equally-W21page-232->

Conveners Training

At the beginning of the month, the Convener's met for their training day at the brand new SYP offices. As a non-voting member of the group, I was present to see the convener's go through media training; their responsibilities with regards to SYP's current and future campaigns and to see Andrew Deans MSYP get elected to the board of trustees as the Convener's representative. Huge congratulations to Andrew, and I speak on behalf of the full Board when I say we are looking forward to working with you.

UK Youth Parliament Sitting

Last weekend Grant Costello, Kyle Thornton, Malcolm Andrews and I ventured down to Leeds for the UK Youth Parliament's annual sitting. The weekend was filled with round-table discussions including '4 nations 1 country', and workshops to dictate what motions were to be put forward for the UKYP manifesto which was voted on during a session on Sunday. MSYP for Glasgow Southside Kyle Thornton presented a motion on Universal Credit which passed and will now be in the UKYP's manifesto! Guest speakers included Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow, Minister for Children and Young People Tim Loughton MP and Holocaust survivor Iby Knill. We'll have a more in-depth report coming up soon and a surveymonkey for MSYPs regarding future interactions with UKYP so keep your eyes peeled!

Surveys

Over the coming weeks, SYP ask that you check your emails regularly as we'll be sending out a number of surveys to consult with you and your constituents regarding the Anti-Sectarianism Bill, the Scotland Bill and our future involvement with the UKYP. It's important that we keep up-to-date with your views to ensure that the Scottish Youth Parliament is truly representative, so please make sure you fill out the survey's and distribute them as widely as possible.

Festival of Politics - SYP in Scottish Parliament on Sat 20th August

MSYPs Grant Costello, Terri Miller, Lachlan Bruce, Gina Clark and Sara Ansari took part in an events focus group for the Festival of Politics to ensure all elements of the day - including the pre planning of the Festival - is truly reflective of the interests of young people and that it is youth led. Lachlan and Gina will be facilitating a workshop for the Scottish Youth Parliament. All topics for the debate will come from the SYP's Youth Manifesto Picture the Change, and the debate itself will be facilitated by former SYP Chair - John Loughton. To find out more on the event, contact Kate in the office or go to <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/vli/education/GetthePicture.htm>

Board Training

Last Wednesday the Board undertook our training in sunny Peebles to learn about the legal responsibilities we have as Trustees of the Scottish Youth Parliament. Training was delivered by Ian Watson from Law at Work and External Adviser to the Board Alan Eccles, who is a lawyer with Maclay Murray and Spens and specialises in Charity Law. The day was intense but extremely interesting, and I'm sure the other board members would agree it was highly informative. We look forward to getting started with our next Board meeting to be held on 24th August.

Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival 2011

This weekend SYP will be attending the Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival and although thunderstorms are predicted, we wool forward to SYP presence in the youth zone of the festival. We will be promoting our Love Equally campaign by distributing our Love Equally silicon wedding bands and getting young people to sign up to our petition. If you're going along to Belladrum this year, make sure you pop min and say hi.

Member of the Moment

Have you or an MSYP you work with been involved in something amazing in the past month? From campaigning to save a local youth centre to taking part in a national conference on behalf of constituents, I want to hear about it so I can share the news in our monthly e-letter! Drop me a message on Facebook, or send me an email.

That's all for this month! We'll update you on the campaign activities with pictures of MSYPs promoting our Love Equality campaign and much, much more! This is an important campaign for all of us, please download the petition and get as many signatures as possible.

Hope everyone was pleased with their exam results!

Speak soon,
Rae

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