



# American Ethical Union

*Inspiring Ethical Communities*

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Annual Society Report to AEU April 2019

Society Report for: The Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

Leader: None

President: Zia Durrani

Administrative Director/Office Contact: Jeanine Rosh, Office Supervisor, Treasurer

2018

## Ethical Action:

The Social Action Committee continues its Postcards campaign – weekly assisting in sending postcards to representatives on Ethical issues.

A “Local Hero” Award is presented each year to a local community member who has worked tirelessly for an ethical cause (presented to non-member).

Active involvement in NJ Campaign for alternatives to isolated confinement. Supporting Bill # A314-S3261.

Produced a position letter on current immigration procedures. The letter is sent to local newspapers, communication sources, and to other groups interested in signing on to the position. We are tracking participation.

Coat collection for a local settlement house. Collection and distribution of writing materials and stamps to locally detained immigrants. (Elizabeth, NJ)

## Sunday Meetings

We have presented programs on climate change, racism in schools, combatting human trafficking, community effort to end hunger, holistic veganism, racism in the food preparation industry, ethical burial, and many other ethical topics.

## Other;

Numerous concerts have been held, some as fundraisers for the Ethical education program.

A brainstorming session was presented (all day) on society goals, programs, ideas for the future. Well attended with many emerging proposals.

We presented Poetry Workshops, Chinese brush painting Workshops, colloquies on current topics.

We have continuing Art Exhibits in the building, with works by local artists, as well as our own members. Artist receptions are held with comments by the artists.

The Society was chosen in 2018 as one of the sites for the Maplewood Arts Tour.

#### Ethical Education

Our Ethical Education for Children program continues to grow, with 12-14 children and families participating.

The program is now run by a co-op of the parents, headed by our member Shannon Kirk.

They meet twice a month, and explore a different theme each week. The mission is to enable children to discover who they are to themselves, the community and the world around them as they become global citizens. The program focuses on developing a robust moral compass in relation to self, others, and the world at large. As part of a caring community, children will explore and develop relationships and humanist values.

Society members are encouraged to meet and get to know the children. We utilize the building meeting rooms upstairs and on the main level, as well as offering trips to other venues.

#### Youth of Ethical Societies:

We currently have no youth program, but we envision that as the Ethical Education program grows we will begin to have candidates for a youth program

#### Future of Ethical Societies:

As our education programs attract younger people, we hope that they will be interested in membership. This is already happening, as we have new members from the program.

#### Communications:

We continue to expand our PR with all available social media, local ads appearing each week, articles on individual programs. We have been receiving a good response in terms of meeting attendance and feedback.

We mail some 250 newsletters each month, and utilize a large email list.

Our building is used by various groups with about 200 people passing through each week.

#### Finances:

We operate in the black. This past year we changed some investments to 5 rotating 5 year CD's at a better rate than the previous investments.

#### Membership:

We lost 2 members to death, including Betty Levin, who headed the membership committee. Currently Jill Ferrar has taken on membership chair.

We have 8 new members as a result of the Ethical Education program and 2 other new members. We ask visitors to complete a little form, then follow-up with an email, and phone call.

New developments:

All are incorporated in information above.

Goals for 2019:

Increase membership through programs, Ethical Education program and personal outreach to visitors, along with follow/up with interested parties.

Participate in some form of immigrant program (We are continuing with the letter campaign)

Involvement in the "save the bees" and safe pesticide campaigns. Looking onto selling signs for lawns.

Make some necessary repairs to the building.

Continue to expand the Ethical Education program.

Find new PR paths to attract like-minded humanists, as well as educate the community as to who we are.