

*Art Contest: People of the Pines. People of Peace.*

Dear Middle School Students of Evesham Township Schools, Big Brothers & Big Sisters, & Moorestown Friends,

All of us live in Lenapehoking, the land of the Lenni-Lenape. Over three hundred years ago, the Lenni-Lenape encountered European cultures: Swedes, Finns, and English Quakers. Their cultures intermarried and managed to live in peace. During the 1700's Quakers started the Anti-Slavery movement. Jewish refugees arrived in West Jersey in the 1800's. This story of our cultural heritage; one of tolerance, respect, and recognition of human rights is unique.

If social injustice is one of your concerns and you have a desire to take antiracist action, then it's my honor to invite you to learn about an art contest for our times sponsored by a partnership of community groups: Friends of the Black Run Preserve, Evesham Township School District, Evesham Middle School PTA, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Delaware Valley, and Evesham Township's Human Rights Advisory Council.

During the 1960's I was your age, a time when the Civil Rights Movement lead by Dr. Martin Luther King was made real to me through the pages of Life Magazine. Photojournalism presented racial injustice in a way a middle schooler could understand. Today, video of the George Floyd's murder makes clear to all, the racial injustice that still exists in America. The Vietnam War was brought into my living room via television. Until the Afghanistan War, it was America's longest war. For many young people, awareness of such events is a call to action. Perhaps that's how you feel now.

This art contest, *People of the Pines. People of Peace*, is designed to provide a point of view from your generation. You may enter as an individual, with a partner, or with a group up to 4. The art work can be music, poetry, video, or visual art. If you choose to accept this invitation then your parent/guardian must send a request to [nikkis@blackrun.org](mailto:nikkis@blackrun.org) then you'll receive a link for a Zoom presentation on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30pm. This presentation will provide a historical overview of our region, highlighting a variety of individuals, cultural groups, their impacts, and the contest details. After viewing the presentation, if you choose to participate in the art contest, your parent/guardian may request and receive the following:

- Registration and parent permission form
- Historical Resource Outline with bibliography, links to video resources, museums, etc.
- Judging Rubric (submissions due 4-16) & prize information (winners announced 5-18)

The winning artwork will be on permanent display in the Black Run Preserve. The contest partners look forward to your positive reply by requesting the link ([nikkis@blackrun.org](mailto:nikkis@blackrun.org)). We hope you'll be motivated to inspire the recreation of a culture of peace through art.

Sincerely,  
John Volpa  
Founder & Chair of the Friends of the Black Run Preserve