

Wideland News

SWANSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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Pupil to serve on national panel

By Jimmy Williams

A Swansboro High School student has been selected to serve on a national advisory board through her association with the SAVE Promise Club chapter at the school.

Izabela Willis, a rising senior, will be part of the "elite" Sandy Hook Promise National Youth Advisory Board for the 2018-19 school year, according to Martha Kelley, advisor to SHS SAVE chapter. Kelley will serve as Willis's "adult advisor."

"The Youth Advisory Board requires commitment, dedication and sacrifice of time," Kelley said. "Sandy Hook Promise is a partner of the SAVE Promise clubs for which Izabela is the newly elected SHS chapter president."

SHS Principal Chris André called Willis's selection "a very exciting and unique opportunity for our SAVE program and SHS."

Willis will be one of only eight Youth Advisory Board Members to serve on the 2018-19 Youth Advisory Board and School Advisory Committee.

These students, who come from across the United States, have "demonstrated leadership skills and service in their school and community through their SAVE Promise Club, as well as have experience with Sandy Hook's Say Something and Start With Hello programs," according to literature provided by SHP.

"These students and their adult advisors should possess a commitment and dedication to protecting the youth in their school and community and preventing gun violence and other forms of

violence and self-harm before it takes place," according to the recruitment literature.

Students and their advisors were recruited through SAVE – which stands for Students Against Violence Everywhere – and Sandy Hook Promise, according to Kelley.

"This is a competitive application and the chosen candidates, along with their adult advisors, will play a key role in informing Sandy Hook Promise's stu-

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Student selected to national board ...

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dent and school engagement, as well as representing Sandy Hook Promise at key events," Kelley said. "We are very excited and pleased she has been given this opportunity."

Willis will begin her service this summer by traveling to Newtown, Conn., July 23-26 to attend a leadership planning institute for the SAVE Promise Club sponsored by SHP.

In addition to the July trip, Willis will attend a planning retreat Jan. 19-21, 2019, and participate in planning, speaking and presenting at the annual SAVE Youth Summit in spring 2019.

She will be expected to work independently on assignments throughout the year including writing articles for the SAVE Promise Club newsletter.

Other activities in which Willis may be involved include:

- Serving as the national youth voice for Sandy Hook Promise and SAVE Promise Clubs.
- Assisting in creating a calendar of activities for SAVE Promise Clubs.
- Assisting in planning and participating in national awareness activities throughout the year including activities Say Something Week, National SAVE Day, Start With Hello Week, and National Youth Violence Prevention Week.
- Working to strengthen the SHS SAVE Promise Club while working in the Swansboro community to aid other clubs and establish new clubs.
- Exemplifying leadership skills and positive character traits to represent the SAVE Promise Clubs and Sandy Hook Promise across the country.

According to the recruitment information, "creative and energetic students, along with their solution-oriented and supportive adult advisors are needed to create new ideas, inform youth-led sustainability best practices, help share SHP's Call to Action Weeks and program development and implementation, and plan and attend the Annual SAVE Youth Summit."

The youth and adult advisors will be asked to provide "voice" to demonstrate the impact and reach of Sandy Hook Promise.

The adult advisor must be willing to support their YAB member, implement and support

Organizations merge

Sandy Hook Promise is a national, nonprofit organization based in Newtown, Conn.

"We are led by several family members whose loved ones were killed in the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School on Dec. 14, 2012, that claimed the lives of 20 first-graders and 6 educators. SHP is focused on preventing gun violence (and other forms of violence and victimization) before it happens by educating and mobilizing youth and adults on mental health and wellness programs that identify, intervene and help at-risk individuals. SHP is a moderate, above-the-politics organization that supports sensible non-policy and policy solutions that protect children and prevent gun violence. Our intent is to honor all victims of gun violence by turning our tragedy into a moment of transformation," according to its printed information.

SAVE formed in April 1989, in the wake of

the death of 17-year-old Alex Orange, a Charlotte high school student killed in gun violence.

The following week, students returned to school, joined together in their grief, and vowed that something was going to change, and change for the better! The group formed Students Against Violence Everywhere.

In 2017, SAVE and Sandy Hook Promise, combined efforts to collectively expand their reach and sustain their work on educating and empowering young people to help prevent gun violence (and other forms of violence and victimization) before it happens.

There are now thousands of SAVE Promise Clubs across the country.

The clubs are places for young people across the country to show their leadership, creativity and passion for protecting their friends, schools and communities from violence before it happens.

For more information, visit www.sandyhookpromise.org



Izabel Willis

The club, board purpose

The SAVE Promise Clubs and Sandy Hook Promise Youth Advisory Board Purpose:

- The Youth Advisory Board exists to empower, educate and engage a core group of youth to serve as the national voice of SAVE Promise Clubs and Sandy Hook Promise. The YAB has been a best practice for SAVE for 20 years and enables SAVE activities to be youth-led and -owned.

- In 2018-19, SHP will enhance the YAB by also including adult advisors.

The adult advisors will support their YAB members, as well as provide insight and feedback on SHP programs and best practices for sustainability, school outreach and engagement.

The SAVE Promise Clubs and Sandy Hook Promise Youth Advisory Board Goals:

- Train a core group of youth and adult advisors in Sandy Hook Promise messaging, programs and goals.
- Engage these youth as

the youth voice and school voice of SHP when called upon for special activities, events and requests.

- Engage the youth in planning activities for SAVE Promise Clubs for the 2018-2019 school year, including Call To Action Weeks.

- Inform school and educator engagement and program feedback and input.

- Inform SHP Programs, Call to Action Weeks and outreach, including what is working, what's missing and what needs improved.

- Ensure that SHP has a direct connect to the youth in our programs, and that SHP is listening to youth's needs and goals.

- Assist in the annual SAVE Youth Summit planning and provide breakout sessions at the Summit to keep the Summit youth-led and -centered.

- Build a stronger connection to schools in our host as well as inform educator engagement best practices and ideas.

for students to experience team building activities for safety awareness and kindness towards each other," she added.

During that event, on April 19, Willis said the Swansboro Police Department provided an officer to talk to students about safe driving.

The chapter sponsored a "yellow ribbon" event during which students were given an outlet for dealing with thoughts and feelings of suicide or depression.

"SHS SAVE Promise Club holds monthly meetings where we discuss upcoming projects and ways to help promote safety in our school," Willis said.

As a senior, Willis will be in her third year of involvement in SAVE and her fourth year in the high school's orchestra, according to information provided by Kelley.

"She served as historian for her club and has been elected and will serve as president for the 2018-19 school year," Kelley said. "She spends her free time doing things she enjoys, such as reading, listening to music and just hanging out."

When she isn't doing that, she is working on schoolwork, helping friends, participating in SAVE meetings and volunteering.

Willis has completed more than 100 volunteer hours during the 2017-18 school year through working in concessions with the track and basketball coaches

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Meeting schedules for July

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