

Local teen heads to national bike summit

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Thomas Teague, a junior at Thornton Academy in Saco, will join more than 375 youth bicycle advocates this weekend at the National Youth Bike Summit in New York City.

Teague will be representing both Maine and the Community Bicycle Center in Biddeford during the course of the three-day event, which will feature workshop sessions and a chance to network with other biking enthusiasts from across the country.

The ultimate goal of the gathering, according to the Youth Bike Summit website, is to "bring people together from different disciplines and backgrounds to network, learn and explore how the bicycle is a catalyst for positive social change."

The website said some of the ideas generated at the summit in recent years include the creation of a girls bike club in Chicago, a youth-run bike shop in Boston



Thomas Teague

and the Women's Empowerment in Cycling group in New York City.

Accompanying Teague to the summit will be Matt Perkins, a student at Biddeford High School, and Andrew Burnell, the program director at the Community Bicycle Center.

Teague has been active with the bike center for just under five years. He volunteers in the center's earn-a-bike program and is a tandem captain for the bike center's annual Trek Across Maine team.

He is the son of Tom and Marlea Teague.

He said one of the reasons he first got involved with the Community Bicycle Center is because "I love working with my hands."

What's kept him going back is the people at the bike center, including the staff, Teague said.

"I love the people there and its lots of fun. Andy Greif (executive director) Andrew Burnell (program director) and Bronwyn Potthoff (resource development and community relations director) are some of the best people I know."

Teague is not sure just what to expect at the summit, but said, "I'm just really excited to participate this year."

- Kate Irish Collins