

**LEWIS COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD**

**2016**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

The Lewis County Youth Bureau presents this overview of 2016 Lewis County youth programs, that funding was made possible by the execution of the 2016 Resource Allocation Plan, between, the County of Lewis by and through the Youth Bureau, and NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). The execution of the allocation plan, qualifies our county for state reimbursement in accordance with NYS OCFS allocation of funds, appropriated for counties engaged in comprehensive planning for youth services/programs. This report also reflects the allocation of Youth Project funds approved by the Lewis County Board of Legislators.

**2016**

***Governance & Administration***

***Youth Bureau Legislative Committee***

Roscoe Fawcett, Chairperson

Andrea Moroughan, Legislator

Greg Kulzer, Legislator

Michael A. Tabolt, Chairperson Board of Legislators

Liz Swearingin, County Manager

**Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board**

***Ex-Officio Member***

Penny L. Demo, Director

***Voting Members***

Scott Mathys-Chairperson, Madeline Lehman-Vice-Chairperson and Student Representative Lowville Academy, Rhonda Vanucchi, John Exford, Michele Ledoux, Ward Dailey, Chief Randy Roggie, Mike Leviker, Mary Martin, Deanna Edick, and Brian Finn.

***Voting Members***

***Student Representatives***

Grace Metzler-Lowville Academy, Reagan Domagala and Marsella Ventura-South Lewis, Noah Ramer and Dustin Snyder-Copenhagen, Camille Ledoux and Shaun Shaw-Beaver River and Jurnee Allen and Allyson Rae Hall- Harrisville. . *In their capacity, the student representatives provide a youth perspective, engage in discussion about issues facing youth, conduct program monitoring, review applications for funding and ultimately make recommendations to fund future youth programs/projects within our county. Without the input offered from our student representatives we could lose the voice of youth in our youth programming decision making.* • ***“DID YOU KNOW: Student Member’s terms end when they graduate from High School, or cease to be a full time student of the District they represent. For the past several years, student representatives whose term of appointment is slated to expire, are tasked with seeking out their own replacement. They do this by inviting student(s) to a few board meetings prior to***

*their term expiring. If the student expresses interest in being appointed to the board and is committed to being on the board, their name is submitted to the Lewis County Board of Legislators for approval. • All Members of the Lewis County Youth Bureau are appointed by the Lewis County Board of Legislators.*

***The Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board was established and created by Resolution #30-1997, and adopted by the Lewis County Board of Legislators on February 5, 1997.***

The Board is an “Advisory” Board rather than a “Policy Making” Board. The board makes recommendations regarding the provision of services to youth in Lewis County. The membership reflects a balance between government and non-government representatives who are directly concerned with the well-being of youth. Representation on the board consists of up to a maximum of 2 student representatives from each public school district in the county. Presently the board has 20 voting members and 1 Ex-Officio member.

### ***Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Youth Development Funds***

Historically up until 2014, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) funds were categorized into separate “pots of funding” to include: Initiative (for start-up programs); Special Delinquency and Services funding (for prevention of juvenile delinquency); and Recreation. The Youth Bureau had no discretion in where the funding would best benefit Lewis County Youth, but rather the board was more of a pass through agency. However, beginning in 2014, OCFS re-titled the funding to reflect “one pot of funding” called “Youth Development Funds.” Youth Development Funds are targeted for early intervention and prevention services that are designed to curb the high priority problems affecting youth. These funds are intended to be used for youth most likely to become involved in the criminal justice system; to expand community service; and for summer programs; or to fulfill unmet youth program needs in the county. With this change it was an opportunity for Youth Bureaus to have discretion in allocating the funds based on their community needs, and what programs best benefit their county.

In 2016 the OCFS allocation of Youth Development funds to Lewis County was \$21,115 (this allocation amount is based on the youth population of the county according to the current census). In July 2016, Lewis County received an additional allocation of \$2,585 in Legislative add on monies, bringing the total 2016 allocation to **\$23,700**.

### ***AWARDING OF 2016 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUNDING***

***Total Amount Available = \$23,700***

*In 2016 the following Lewis County Youth Programs were awarded OCFS Youth Development Funds*

**Mountain View Prevention Services-Youth Advocate Program \$6,000:** The Youth Advocate program works with students in Lewis County schools including Beaver River, Lowville, and Harrisville from kindergarten through grade 12. The program provides counseling for youth dealing with problems at home; separated or divorced parent issues; academic struggles; peer problems; dating relationship

troubles; grief issues or communication difficulties. Referrals are made by guidance counselors, parents, and self-referrals. Youth benefitting from this program may present behavioral problems or they may simply be feeling overwhelmed with something in their life and have a need to talk to someone who can help in sorting things out. Youth Advocates are not counselors but rather are skill builders. They meet with students individually or in groups depending on the need or issue to be resolved with goals being set. A success story noted in March 2016: A 10<sup>th</sup> Grader Student had anger management issues, was struggling with grades, and was making inappropriate statements to girls due to poor social skills. In the last three months the student had learned better coping skills, plays sports, is doing his homework and keeping his grades up, has not had a disciplinary referral, and is developing healthy friendships.

**Lowville Village Police Department-Youth Aid Officer/Safe Child ID Card, Programs: \$4,500:** The Lowville Village Police Departments New York State certified Youth Aid Officer, interacts with youth that have interactions with law enforcement agencies and provide guidance for troubled youth. Additionally the Youth Aid Officer and Chief conduct or supervise the administration of issuing free identification cards through the "Safe Child" identification system at public events and upon request of individual youth groups. With the transition of leadership at the Lowville Village Police Department this year, the funding was utilized to train an officer to be a NYS Certified Youth Aid Officer and to purchase supplies needed to continue to offer FREE Safe Child ID Cards for Lewis County Youth. In 2016 the Lowville Village Police Department processed over 800 Safe Child ID Cards at various events including but not limited to: Lowville, Lyons Falls, and Beaver River Head Start Programs; Lowville School Special Education Program; Lewis County Fair; Family Fun Fit Faire; Lewis County Night Out; and the Lowville Cream Cheese Festival.

***History of the acquisition of Safe Child ID Equipment System:*** Operation Safe Child was created in July 2005 in an effort to raise child safety awareness. Safe Child ID Cards contain the child's name, biographical information (date of birth, gender, height, weight, hair and eye color, and fingerprint images). The card is processed in less than two minutes. The information gathered is digitally recorded and stored in a database at the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) in Albany. In the event DCJS receives a missing child report, the fingerprints of that child are included in a special search file and compared against all incoming fingerprints submitted to the agency. In addition to being able to quickly provide important details to police agencies investigating child disappearances, the New York State Safe Child ID Card serves as an important tool when used in conjunction with the New York State AMBER Alert and Missing Child Alert programs. The ID cards allow essential missing child information to be electronically disseminated, statewide if necessary, within minutes and dramatically increases the possibility of bringing a missing child home unharmed. It is recommended by DCJS that, Safe Child ID Cards are updated on an annual basis. ***Acquisition of Safe Child ID Equipment: In January 2010, the Lewis County Youth Bureau and the Lowville Village Police Department coordinated efforts to acquire the Safe Child ID Camera System. In April of 2010 the equipment was purchased through funding made possible by the Lewis County Youth Bureau and donations from local agencies and businesses.*** Since the acquisition of the safe child ID equipment, the Lowville Village Police Department has been fortunate in getting donations to sustain costs associated with the equipment (supplies/ink ribbons and card stock) to continue to provide this important FREE service to Lewis County Youth. Since the

acquisition of the Safe Child ID Equipment, approximately 4,519+ Safe Child ID Cards have been processed by the Lowville Village Police Department!

**Lewis County Sheriff's Office-Juvenile Aid Officer Program \$3,500:** The Juvenile Aid Officer Program is designed to help youth make the right choices when it comes to a variety of topics including consumption, selling, of alcohol and drugs and to learn about the consequence to their actions whether it be positive or negative as it relates to making the right choices.

**"Lewis County Night Out" - \$2,585:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual "Lewis County Night Out" event was held on September 8, 2016 at the Lewis County Fairgrounds from 6-8:30pm. This event is sponsored locally by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office, Lewis County Youth Bureau, Lewis County Opportunities, Inc., and the Northern Regional Center for Independent Living. The event is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness; and to strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. During this year's opening ceremony, a recognition plaque was presented to Arlene Hall, Director of Mountain View Prevention Services for their alcohol and drug prevention efforts and due to the numerous attacks this year, throughout our country, upon law enforcement; both verbal assaults and even the senseless killing of police officers, in Lewis County we recognize and appreciate what our Law Enforcement agencies do to protect our community, therefore, the following agencies were presented with plaques on behalf of our community: Lowville Village Police Department; Lewis County Sheriff's Office; NYS Police in Lowville; Forest Rangers-Lowville; and the DEC-Lowville. The plaques were embossed with the message: ***"Presented to you on behalf of the grateful residents of Lewis County in appreciation of your Service."*** Additionally, Robert Rosolanko, Counselor at Syracuse Behavioral Health provided a powerful testimonial related to his past drug addiction. There were demonstrations by local Law Enforcement agencies including a narcotic search and apprehension with the NYS Police Bloodhound and K9 units; Lewis County Stop DWI presented a powerful traveling display entitled "One Second Everything Changes." This display depicted a timeline of the day, of teenage athletes who were involved in and died in motor vehicle accidents as a result of DWI. Additionally there were over 30 prevention awareness vendors on-site who provided information to attendees; there were many youth and teen activities; and Moose Radio broadcasted from the event. The event was a success with an estimated 300 children; teens; and adults in attendance.

**Lewis County Youth Bureau \$2,115:** These funds are used to support the stipend for the Director's position, postage, dues, and office supplies.

**Summer Recreational Programs \$5,000:** A total of five (5) Municipalities applied for and received 2016 Youth Development funds to support Summer/Fall Recreational Programs. Recreational programs are designed to provide a positive alternative for filling leisure time, opportunity to develop athletic skills, relaxation and or play, and a diversion from the daily routine of life that many young people need. Listed below are the municipalities who applied for and received funding: **Town of Diana-Summer/Fall Recreational Programs \$1,000:** Approximately 175 youth between the ages of 5 – 18 participated in the summer and fall program offerings; **Town of Greig-Summer Recreation Program \$1,000:** Approximately 170 youth between the ages of 5 – 14 participated in the program; **Village of Croghan-Summer Recreation Program \$1,000.** Approximately 128 youth between the ages of 4-18 participated in the program; **Village of Lowville-Summer Recreation Program \$1,000.** Approximately 65 youth per day

between the ages of 5 – 14 participated in the program and the **Village of Port Leyden-Summer Recreation Program \$1,000**. Approximately 124 youth between the ages of 0 – 14 participated in the program.

**“Did You Know”**

The Youth Bureau requires that youth programs that run year to year, that receive OCFS-Youth Development Funds, submit a quarterly report. The reports are reviewed at regularly scheduled board meetings. The reports include a “Success Story” during that quarter.

**“Did You Know”**

Lewis County Youth Bureau Board Members, Monitor all youth programs that are awarded Youth Development Funds. The monitoring process is two-fold. It helps the Youth Bureau to continue to meet monitoring requirements set by the Office of Children and Family Services, and enables the Youth Bureau to be more accountable for programs they fund. *Process:* Board members volunteer to make an on-site visit where they meet with the program director; tour the facility; and review the application submitted. This is done in an effort to make sure the application reflects the program offerings and meets the outcomes as outlined in the application. The Youth Board member may make suggestions of new and innovative services that the program director could incorporate into their program offering in an effort to enhance the program. The completed monitoring document is filed and kept in the Lewis County Youth Bureau office.

**2016 County Projects Funds**

**\$5,000**

Historically, each year, during the budget process, the Youth Bureau requests County Project funding through the Board of Legislators. This funding is not guaranteed from year to year, however fortunately, over the past 17 years, the Board of Legislators have continued to recognize the need for youth programming, therefore have supported the allocation of these funds. In the Youth Bureau’s 2016 budget, we originally requested \$3,000 in County Project funding, which was honored. However in February 2016 the Board of Legislators generously, allocated an additional \$2,000 in County Project Funds bringing our total 2016 allocation to \$5,000. **THANK YOU!**

County Project funding must be used for direct youth services/programs (this funding cannot be used to support salaries). A press release announcing the availability of funds and the criteria for applying for funds is issued to the local media for publication. Applications received are reviewed by the Youth Board who, award the funding based on consensus. In 2016, the following youth programs were recipients of County Project funds: • Constableville Volunteer Fire Department – Youth component program called R.A.M. (Restricted Active Members) - Protective Clothing (\$1,000) • Harrisville Free Library – Summer Reading Program (\$250) • Harrisville Central School District – Character Education Program and Fall Festival (\$655) • Village of Croghan Park – Youth Expressions Swing and Frame (\$1,795) • Cornell Cooperative Extension – 4H Teen Council International Day (\$250) • Village of Port Leyden Recreation Program – Sports Equipment (\$250) • Adirondack Pop Warner Association Cheerleaders –Cheerleading Mats (\$800).

It is important to note that in 2016 the Youth Bureau received ten (10) proposals for County Project Funds, with the total amount requested equaling \$12,481.42! With that said, the Lewis County Youth Board did an incredible job in reviewing applications; asking applicant's questions; and in making tough decisions on awarding the funds.

#### ***"Did You Know"***

*Applicants being considered for both OCFS-Youth Development Funding and County Project Funding are invited to provide a verbal presentation of their youth program/project to the Youth Bureau Board at a regular scheduled meeting. The inability to provide a presentation does not exclude the applicant from consideration.* • Tyler Eddy (former)-Student Representative from Harrisville Central School, was recognized this year as the Academic All Star on Channel 7 and was also recognized as an Outstanding Citizen by the NY Business Living Magazine for his involvement in Harrisville Central School Districts – School Environment Club; Adopt-A-Highway program in Lewis County and his involvement in youth programs, specifically the Lewis County Youth Bureau.

#### **Community Requests**

The Lewis County Youth Bureau receives invites throughout the year to participate in community events as well as requests for volunteering. \*\*\*Students who are in Government classes in their school district, must meet a community service requirement, therefore the Youth Bureau has reached out to school districts, to help students meet the requirement by volunteering for a variety of events/youth programs. Some of the 2016 community events that the Youth Bureau participated in included: Recorded radio spots on Moose Radio and did the marketing of the Northern Regional Center for Independent Living Annual "Lewis County Walk for Wellness" that was held May 12<sup>th</sup>; Radio spots and marketing for the Lewis County Planning Department's– Seasonal Bus runs to Old Forge. Madeline Lehman and Reegan Domagala- Youth Bureau Student Representatives were actors in a WWNYS 7 commercial regarding Lewis County Public Transportation to SUNY POLY Utica and Mohawk Valley Community College (summer); and Madeline Lehman, Reegan Domagala, and Noah Ramer were actors in a second (winter) version of the Lewis County Public Transportation commercial; and helped in recruitment of volunteers to assist at the 2016 Cream Cheese Festival.

**Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT):** In October of 2016 the Youth Bureau received a community request from the MDT to host a fundraiser to support the purchase of child friendly items (new toys, toy box, kids table, coloring books and age appropriate books) for toddler through teen, to be used in the waiting room of the newly established Lewis County Child Advocacy Center. The MDT is made up of: The District Attorney, Lewis County Attorney's Office, Lewis County DSS, Lewis County Sheriff's Office, Lewis County Probation, Lewis County General Hospital, Lowville Village Police Department, NYS Police, Lewis County Opportunities, Inc., and the Victims' Assistance Center of Jefferson County. The Mission of the CAC is to: Strengthen and protect children, families and the community through an interdisciplinary approach to cases of child sexual abuse and physical abuse; promote early intervention, coordinated investigations and collaborative action plans through the MDT; provide a safe, neutral, and child friendly setting for child interviews, coordinate all victim's services including medical services to expedite the investigations and prosecution of cases, and provide victims and non-offending family members with effective and immediate support and services with minimal re-traumatization. The center will provide

Lewis County with a physical location to meet with children and families. The target is children up to age 18. This location will have advocates available and access the social work services and be used by local law enforcement and child protective services. The estimated number of children to be served at the center is 50-70 per year. Through the help of the Youth Bureau's good friends at Great Lot's Sportsman's Club, the Youth Bureau hosted a fundraiser by utilizing items donated by the Club by offering "Bulk Items of the Day." The Bulk Items of the Day" were brand new kitchen items such as small strainers, turkey basters, scoopers, napkin holders, etc. People were invited to purchase as many as they would like, until they were gone. On behalf of the Youth Bureau, the Youth Bureau presented MDT with \$362.35 at their November 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting to be used to purchase child friendly items for the new Child Advocacy Center.

## 2016

### 2016 SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

#### Seasonal Bus Runs to Old Forge

As youth seek employment in a competitive job market, it becomes even more important that the workforce system adequately prepare them to obtain good employment and their career pathway. Many youth lack the basic experience employers require regarding attitude and behaviors necessary for them to succeed in a social work environment. This is why it is so important that we continue the seasonal bus runs to Old Forge for employment opportunities year after year as it provides the opportunity to help Lewis County youth in forming their lifelong work ethics. With the support, collaboration and partnerships between Lewis County Officials, Lewis County Planning Department, Lewis County Youth Bureau, and

#### *"DID YOU KNOW"*

*In an effort to keep the Youth Bureau membership up to date on new youth initiative s or programs or community concerns, periodically throughout the year, agencies request to present at regularly scheduled board meetings.*

Birnie Bus, the 5<sup>th</sup> year of this Seasonal Bus run to Old Forge for job opportunities and leisure, was a success. Youth and Adults age 15 years and older were able to utilize a bus to take those who secured employment at Water Safari to their orientation on June 4, 2016. Cost to utilize public transportation was \$1.00 each way. **Note:** All residents are able to utilize this seasonal offering for leisure as well. The seasonal bus run began June 16<sup>th</sup> through Labor Day weekend. A second bus was added due to demand from July 2<sup>nd</sup> through August 12, 2016. The bus pick-up schedule included: Josh's Riverside Restaurant in Croghan, Tops Plaza in Lowville and Boonville, Howard G. Sackett Technical Center in Glenfield, Edge Hotel in Lyons Falls, Lock 96 in Port Leyden, and Woodgate Post Office and Frankie's Restaurant. Annually, the Youth Bureau continues to assist with the promotion of the seasonal bus runs by assisting in the marketing of the program including radio spots; promoting the program in school districts, and throughout the county and in assisting the DSS Employment & Training unit in securing additional employment, on route to Old Forge. In June 2016 there were 17 service days with 943 passengers; July 2016 – 31 service days with 2604 passengers; August 2016 – 31 days with 1832 passengers and in September 2016 – 5 service days with 130 passengers. In July and August the planning department ran two buses to Old Forge for this seasonal bus runs.

### **BOCES Special Needs Program – Coordination of Efforts**

Due to construction at Lowville Academy school district, BOCES Special Needs Program made up of 45-51 youth, did not have access to the districts pool or playground, therefore a request was received to transport the class to Whetstone Gulf for a day of summer fun. With the coordination of efforts, between the Special Needs Program at BOCES, the Lewis County Youth Bureau, Lewis County Planning Department; Lewis County Community Services, and the County of Lewis County Manager and the Planning Departments Legislative Committee, the request was approved with the Planning Department paying for the cost of transporting youth in the special needs program to Whetstone Gulf for a very special day of fun in the sun. *Succeeding in making good things happen, is truly all about partnerships.*

### **Homeless Christmas Tree”**

**“Homeless Christmas Tree” Initiative and “Homeless Bin” Project:** The Lewis County Youth Bureau in support of the Lewis County Department of Social Services as well as many other agencies, recognize that there is a hidden epidemic that touches the lives of most of our citizens in one way or another. This epidemic has to do with homelessness, safe and affordable housing, “under” housing and economically vulnerable constituents. Families and individuals continue to seek out emergency housing, therefore the Lewis County Youth Bureau again this year sought out donations for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual “Homeless Christmas Tree” initiative that began November 28, 2016 through December 23, 2015. Items donated are used for the “Homeless Bin” project. Each bin contains personal hygiene, kitchen and bathroom supplies (items needed when an individual or family starts over). The bins are stored at DSS where they are readily available. In 2016 forty (40) plus bins were provided to those in need. Additionally in 2016 donations for the initiative helped 2 families who were displaced from their homes due to house fires, and we were able, to help other prevention awareness agencies and school districts to meet the needs of their consumers and students. This year, Megan Hoch, Teacher at South Lewis Central School District, 4<sup>th</sup> grade art students, painting pictures on the topic “What Does Homelessness Look Like to Me” and her 8<sup>th</sup> grade MAP Achievement Program students, wrote essays on the same topic. The paintings and essays were displayed at the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce during the duration of the initiative; Camille Ledoux- a senior at BRCS and a youth board member, took it upon herself to have a satellite “Homeless Christmas Tree” at BRCS. In effort to make sure this annual initiative continues at BRCS after Camille graduates from high school, she has already recruited other Future Farmers of America youth to continue this project in 2017; The 4-H Cloverbud Club is one of the youngest clubs through 4-H. As a group, they decided to collect donations for the “Homeless Christmas Tree” initiative. The Cloverbuds’ donated an abundance of personal hygiene, kitchen, and bath supplies; Fausta Post who has a youth group from St. Peter’s Church in Lowville, collected donations and made “Blessing Bags” for the “Homeless Christmas Tree” initiative. The “Blessing Bags” are bags filled with personal hygiene items; Father Chris Carrara and his Parishioners at St. Peters Roman Catholic Church in Lowville, donated an overwhelming array of baby items, diapers, clothing and more. Additionally, so many other community members, businesses, churches, school districts, clubs, agencies and County Government staff supported the initiative. THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU FOR MAKING THIS IMPORTANT INITIATIVE A SUCCESS!



### ***Revisions of the Lewis County Youth Advisory Board's By-Laws***

In 2016 the Lewis County Youth Bureau recognized the need to review and change our current By-Laws, dated July 22, 2014, to better conform with new directives from OCFS on the allocation of a Youth Development Funds as well as to make the document consistent to expectations of being appointed to the Youth Bureau Board. A Review Committee was formulated, consisting of Penny Demo-Director, Scott Mathys-Chairperson, and Roscoe Fawcett- Legislator. A few of the main revisions were: The removal of having Proxy Votes; and the addition of a section related to the allocation of OCFS Youth Development Funds. Proposed changes were presented to the full Youth Bureau Advisory Board on February 24, 2016 and were adopted.

### **Recognition of Past Youth Bureau Student Representatives**

At the June 2016 Youth Bureau meeting, the Youth Bureau recognized and honored the following Student Representatives whose term of office on the board expired due to them graduating from high School: Olivia Brooker-Lowville Academy; Nathan DeSantis and Morgan Austin-South Lewis; Tyler Eddy-Harrisville; Seth Shaw and Luke Moser-Beaver River and Christi Thomas-Copenhagen Central. Nathan DeSantis who served on the Youth Bureau Board from July 3, 2013 to June 2016, was the first student since the Youth Bureau was established in 1997 to be nominated and selected to serve in an officer position of Vice-Chairperson of the Youth Bureau.

### ***Letter***

#### ***Submitted By: Scott Mathys, Chairperson Lewis County Youth Bureau***

I consider myself fortunate to work with all the compassionate members of the Lewis County Youth Advisory Board. I strongly believe the impact of this advisor board is far reaching in our community.

One of the particular high points of this past year was the Lewis County Night Out event. Across our nation there are pockets of scorn and disdain towards law enforcement. The Lewis County Night Out event, and similar events throughout the country, helps to bridge the gap between law enforcement and youth. It was a successful experience that builds-up community relationships and doesn't break them down; a lesson that should echo throughout many facets of the nation.

Throughout the year I continued to be amazed at the commitment of our community and youth members. The preceding pages of this report are littered with projects and activities accomplished in 2016. Each of those accolades is result of the aggregate efforts of this membership. This group made difficult decisions as we tackled challenging funding objectives. Having well-meaning project applications that can't be funded due to lack of revenues is a grim reality. A reality this group embraced. All members burdened that responsibility and supplied the due diligence necessary to allocate limited funds to their best use in Lewis County.

I appreciate the members of the Board of Legislative Youth Committee who have persistently attended our meetings. It's inspiring to have our students see that involvement and interest from the County's Legislature. I certainly enjoyed our student representatives; witnessing firsthand as they grew with the civic engagement that comes from services in this volunteer capacity. Retain that drive in your heart

and it will serve you well. I also thank the board's community members for their voice, wisdom, and guidance that is essential for the growth of our youth. Your commitment doesn't go unnoticed. And last but not least in any way, our Youth Board Director Penny Demo is excellent at the helm of the board. She is an integral part of the ultimate success of the Youth Board. Thank you. I look forward to 2017 and whatever challenges it brings.

Scott Mathys, Chairperson

### **A Thank You**

**Submitted by: Penny L. Demo, Director Lewis County Youth Bureau**

It is my honor and pleasure to work with each and every one of the members of the Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board. In your role, you have to make challenging decisions to fund quality youth programs despite the possibility of a decrease of funding from year to year. I applaud all of you for your diligence in attending meetings; for your perspective on funding applications; for engaging in discussions; for monitoring the programs we fund; and for your commitment and dedication in serving on the Youth Board.

I also want to recognize and thank the following: Scott Mathys, Chairperson of the Youth Board. Scott always brings a professional perspective to our meeting discussions. He truly cares about our community, and has been a positive role model for me and for the entire youth board; The Youth Bureau's Legislative Committee: Roscoe Fawcett-Chairperson, Andrea Moroughan, and Greig Kulzer, and Michael Tabolt, Chairperson of the Board of Legislators, for their commitment to the youth board; for their guidance; and their genuine concern for youth and youth programming in Lewis County; The full Board of Legislators for supporting and recognizing the need for youth program funds in Lewis County; and to past youth board members whose term of appointment ended in June 2015 and who served on the board in the capacity of either a community member or student representatives: **Community Members:** Mickey Dietrich who served on the board for 2 years; Tina Stanford who served on the board for 10 years, and Dan Cushing who served on the board for 14 years. **Student Representatives:** Serena Vargulick and Megan Weber-Lowville Academy, Gaelyn Bronson-South Lewis Central; and Antonio Figueroa-Copenhagen Central. Without the diverse makeup of Community; Government; Non-Government; and Student Representatives, who serve on the Youth Board, we would not be able to make the difficult funding decisions that we make.

My hope is that, when board member terms of office expire they take away a sense of pride and accomplishment in knowing that they made a difference on allocating funds for comprehensive youth programs/services throughout the county and a sense of how important community involvement; compassion for others; and an understanding of the positive impact that is created when agencies collaborate and work in partnership together.

Thank you again to all of you that volunteer your time to the Youth Bureau Board in an effort to make decisions on comprehensive planning for youth services. You are all very much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,  
Penny L. Demo, Director

For additional information regarding the Lewis County Youth Bureau, please visit our website at [www.lewiscountyny.org/youth](http://www.lewiscountyny.org/youth).