

LEWIS COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD
2017
ANNUAL REPORT

The Lewis County Youth Bureau presents this overview of 2017 Lewis County youth programs, that funding was made possible by the execution of the 2017 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 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 County Project funds approved by the Lewis County Board of Legislators.

2017

Governance & Administration
Youth Bureau Legislative Committee

Roscoe Fawcett, Chairperson
Andrea Moroughan, Legislator
Greg Kulzer, Legislator
Michael A. Tabolt, Chairperson Board of Legislators
Ryan Piche, County Manager

Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board

Ex-Officio Member

Penny L. Demo, Director

Voting Members

John Exford-Co-Chairperson, Scott Mathys, Rhonda Vanucchi, Michele Ledoux, Ward Dailey, Officer Brandi S. Groman, Mike Leviker, Deanna Edick, and Brian Finn. **Student Voting Members:** Jacob Hartle-Co-Chairperson representing Harrisville Central, Madeline Lehman-Vice-Chairperson representing Lowville Academy, Jurnee Allen-representing Harrisville Central, Kristin Moshier- representing Lowville Academy, Karrigen Aubin and Victoria Boliver representing Beaver River Central, Elizabeth Wray McGuire-representing South Lewis Central, and Annabelle Atnip and Kimmy Dolan-representing Copenhagen Central School District.

Having student representatives on the board provides the community with a youth perspective on what youth programs are needed in the county. Youth on the board engage in discussion about issues facing youth, conduct program monitoring, review applications for funding and ultimately make

“DID YOU KNOW”

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 18 voting members and 4 Ex-Officio members.

*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. Student Member's terms of appointment end when they graduate from high school, or cease to be a full-time student of the district they represent. When their term on the board is slated to expire, the student representatives are tasked with seeking out their own replacement. This is done by inviting student(s) to board meetings prior to their term expiring. If the student expresses interest and is committed to serving on the board, their name is submitted to the Lewis County Board of Legislators for approval. All Youth Bureau Advisory Board Members are appointed to the board by the Lewis County Board of Legislators. *October 2017, the Youth Bureau Board approved of developing and utilizing an official form, titled "Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board Application." This form will be a helpful tool in seeking out potential board members.*

Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)

Youth Development Funds

*Historically up until 2014, the 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 (for Municipality run recreational programs). 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 thru agency. **In 2014, OCFS re-titled the funding to reflect "One pot of funding" called "Youth Development Funds (YDF)." These 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 youth programs/events; or to fulfill unmet youth program needs in the county. With this change, came the opportunity for Youth Bureaus to allocate the funds based on specific program needs of their communities.***

In 2017 the OCFS allocation of Youth Development funds to Lewis County was \$21,115.00 (the allocation amount is based on the youth population of the county according, to the current census). In July 2017, Lewis County received an additional allocation of \$2,282 bringing the total 2017 allocation of Youth Development Funds to **\$23,397.00** (this was a decrease of \$303.00 from 2016).

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

Jacob Hartle- Student Representative from Harrisville Central School expressed interest in an officer position. At the July 12, 2017 meeting of the Lewis County Youth Bureau, a motion was approved to revise our By-Laws to create a Co-Chairperson officer position vs. Chairperson. Final approval was granted by the Lewis County Board of Legislators (Resolution No. 319-2017). Jacob became the first student to become a Co-Chairperson of the Lewis County Youth Bureau. He Co-Chairs along, side with John Exford, Community Member. **The Lewis County Youth Bureau recognizes that youth are our future, our strength, and our leaders, therefore who better to make decisions on youth program funding than youth.** **Note:** In 2015 Nathan DeSantis, former Student Representative from South Lewis Central, was the first student to be voted in as Vice-Chairperson on the board. Currently Madeline Lehman Student Representative from Lowville Academy serves as our Vice-Chairperson.

AWARDING OF 2017 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

Total Amount Available = \$23,397.00

As directed by the Youth Bureau Board, \$14,000 of the total amount was opened-up via a Request for Proposals to applicants interested in offering program opportunities for youth under the age of 21. Programs were to address the prevention of juvenile delinquency through positive youth development and early intervention services, designed to curb high priority problems affecting youth.

Mountain View Prevention Services-Youth Advocate Program-Requested \$10,000 and were awarded \$5,000. 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; academic struggles; peer problems; dating relationship troubles; and 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 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 the January – March 2017 quarterly report: An 11th grade female student had social anxiety and was failing three main courses. After learning ways to reduce anxiety and improve communication skills, she is now passing all courses. She smiles and is now able to hold her head up instead of looking down. **Lowville Village Police Department-Youth Aid Officer Program and Processing of Safe Child ID Cards-Requested \$6,000 and were awarded \$5,000.** The New York State certified Youth Aid Officer provides guidance for troubled youth that have interactions with law enforcement agencies. The Youth Aid Officer conducts and supervises the administration of issuing free identification cards through the “Safe Child” identification system at public functions and upon requests of individual youth groups. The Lowville Village Police Department requested funds to support additional training of a new Youth Aid Officer. **Copenhagen Central School District-Motivational Speaker-Requested \$1,675 and was awarded \$1,675.** On behalf of Copenhagen Central School District, Zachary Herbert, a student had provided an overview of the school’s request of \$1,675 to cover the balance of the cost of securing David Flood, a motivational speaker, who spoke on the topic of bullying (total cost \$3,350). (Zachary on his own had raised \$1,675 towards the total cost). Zachary had the opportunity to hear Mr. Flood’s message and was very impressed and believed that Mr. Flood could shed light on fixing problems including bullying, that the district was experiencing. Zachary’s hope was that Mr. Flood’s message would help in student’s workability with one another thereby decreasing the negative peer interactions, and prompting students to belong to a whole student body, coming together as one and to stand up to bullying. Mr. Flood addressed students on the topic of character, making the right choices, responsibility, integrity, respect, hard work, and compassion. Two seminars for grades 6th-8th and high school students were held. After the seminars, Mr. Flood worked interactively with students in smaller settings where he challenged students to be the change for the community by creating good relationships between peers. **Therapy Dog Program at Beaver River Central School-Requested \$2,000 and was awarded \$1,325.** The district requested funds to support the training of a Therapy Dog. A group of students from a psychology class had proposed and gained approval from their school board to have a therapy dog program at BRCS. The

dog was incorporated in the middle and high school classrooms of the handler and teacher. The Therapy Dog resource was also made available for crisis intervention, counseling, PAWS for reading programs and other activities. BRCS prides themselves, in creating a welcoming environment for students to learn and grow in. The Therapy Dog is a natural addition to BRCS and has helped to reduce stress in students, has improved physical and emotional well-being, and has decreased anxiety and improved self-esteem. **Lewis County Sheriff's Office—Drug Educational Kit and Materials-Requested \$1,000 and was awarded \$1,000.** The Drug Educational Kit and materials are designed to educate children on safety and drug prevention. The kit will be housed at South Lewis Central School with the School Resource Officer, however the kit will be made available to other districts and at special prevention awareness events such as “Lewis County Night Out.” The kit will be introduced to students in grades 5 – 12. Students will be instructed on the harmful effects and consequences of using drugs.

In May 2017, the Youth Bureau allocated \$6,000 in 2017 Youth Development Funds to support Municipality Run Summer/Fall Recreational Programs through a competitive application process. Applicants could apply for up to \$6,000. A total of six (6) applications were received as follows:

Village of Port Leyden – Summer Recreation Program total cost to run the program was \$15,000, applied for \$5,000. Awarded **\$1,000.**

Town of Greig – Summer Recreational Program total cost to run the program was \$23,110, applied for \$5,000. Awarded **\$1,000.**

Lowville Recreation Commission-total cost to run the program was \$31,600, applied for \$5,000. Awarded **\$1,000.**

Village of Croghan-Recreational Program-total cost to run the program was \$15,000, applied for \$5,000. Awarded **\$1,000.**

Town of Croghan-Recreational Program (Beaver Falls Beach)-total cost to run the program was \$22,000, applied for \$5,000. Awarded **\$1,000.**

Village of Harrisville-Summer/Fall Recreational Program-total cost to run the program was \$7,000 applied for \$2,500. Awarded **\$1,000.**

NOTE: The combined cost for the above six Municipalities to run 2017 Recreational Programs, equaled: \$113,710.00!

At the May 15, 2017, Youth Bureau Advisory Board Meeting, a motion was made and carried to utilize \$2,675 in 2017 Youth Development Funds to support the 2017 “Lewis County Night Out” event.

The applicant for the “Lewis County Night Out” event is the Lewis County Sheriff’s Office. Co-Sponsors include the Lewis County Youth Bureau, Northern Regional Center for Independent Living, and Lewis County Opportunities, Inc. This annual event was held on September 8th at the Lewis County Fairgrounds from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The event is designed to strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnership. There were over 38 prevention awareness and Law Enforcement agencies at the event.

During the opening ceremony, Boy Scout Troop 162 led us into the Pledge of Allegiance and Lt. Murphy from the DEC, played “Amazing Grace” on the Bagpipes. This year Lewis County was heavily impacted by the increase of heroin and other drug consumption, therefore during the opening ceremony we recognized the danger, dedication, and effort that is put forth by our local and neighboring ambulance services, who often are first on the scene of crisis situations. Therefore recognition certificates embossed with the message “*presented to you on behalf of the grateful residents of Lewis County in appreciation of your Service*” were provided to a representative from each of the following Ambulance Services: Beaver Falls Ambulance, Constableville Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Company, Inc., Harrisville Ambulance, J.S. Koster Hose Company-Port Leyden Fire Department, Lewis County Search & Rescue, Lyons Falls Fire Department Ambulance, Turin Ambulance, West Leyden Ambulance, Boonville Ambulance, Camden Ambulance, Natural Bridge Ambulance, and the Carthage Rescue Squad. It was estimated that 350 children; teens; and adults attended this FREE event.

Lewis County Youth Bureau-Administration \$722.00: These funds are used to support cost of postage, OCFS-Youth Bureau Dues; Office Supplies; and to help support a portion of the stipend for the Director’s position.

“DID YOU KNOW”

Prior to awarding funds, applications are provided to the Youth Bureau Board Members to review at least 1-week prior to a regular scheduled meeting. Applicants being considered for either OCFS youth Development Funding or County Project funding, are invited to provide a verbal presentation on their youth program/project to the Youth Board, at a regular scheduled meeting. The inability to provide a presentation does not exclude the applicant from consideration

Request for Additional Unused Revenues

In November 2016, the Youth Bureau sent a letter to the County’s Ways & Means Committee requested consideration of additional unused 2016 revenues. The letter was written on behalf of the Lowville Village Police Department for \$3,000 to support the purchase of a 3-year supply of card stock and ink cartridges for the Safe Child ID Card program. *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 2010, the equipment was purchased through funding made possible by the Lewis County Youth Bureau and donations from local agencies and businesses.* Safe Child ID Cards contain the child’s name, biographical information (date of birth, gender, height, weight, hair and eye color, and fingerprint images). 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 law enforcement agencies, investigating child disappearances, the 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. DCJS recommends that, Safe Child ID Cards are updated on an annual basis. From January 1, 2017 to October 2017 the, Lowville Village

Police Department has processed Safe Child ID Cards at the following locations: Lewis County Department of Social Services; Lewis County Fair; Lewis County Night Out; the Cream Cheese Festival; and Lewis County Head Start (total ID's processed from just the above events = 540). [Thank you to the Board of Legislators who recognized the importance of the Safe Child ID program.](#)

“DID YOU KNOW”

Quarterly Reports

Youth Programs that run year to year, and who are recipients of OCFS Youth Development Funds, are required to submit quarterly reports. The reports are reviewed at regularly scheduled board meetings. The reports include a “Success Story” during the quarter.

“DID YOU KNOW”

Monitoring of Programs that receive OCFS Funding

Lewis County Youth Bureau Board Members monitor all programs that are awarded OCFS-Youth Development Funds. The monitoring process is two-fold. It helps the Youth Bureau to continue to meet monitoring requirements that are set forth by the Office of Children and Family Services, and enables the Youth Bureau to be more accountable for programs they fund. It also helps to ensure the application reflects the program offering and meets the outcomes as outlined in the application. *Process: Board members volunteer to make an on-site visit where they meet with the program director; tour the facility; ask questions pertaining to their application; and may provide suggestions to the program director, of new and innovative services to enhance their program. The completed monitoring document is filed and stored at the Lewis County Youth Bureau office.*

2017-County Projects funds

\$5,000

During the 2017 budget process, the Youth Bureau requested \$5,000 in “County Project” funding through the Lewis County Board of Legislators and the request was granted. This funding is not guaranteed from year to year, however fortunately, over the past 18 years, the Board of Legislators recognize the need to continue to fund quality youth programs, therefore supported our request. Each year, prior to issuing a press release on the availability of County Project funds, the Youth Bureau decides if they would like to designate the funds to a specific youth program, or open the funding up to any youth program through a competitive application process. In 2017 the Youth Board unanimously approved of opening the 2017 funding up to any youth program, activity, or event. County Project funding must be used for direct youth services (this funding cannot be used to support salaries), but rather for youth projects that support positive youth activities/programs/events in Lewis County. 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 Bureau who award the funding based on consensus. In 2017, fourteen **(14) applications were received** with the total amount of funding requested equaling **29,510.00!** The Youth Bureau allocated the County Project funds to the following five (5) youth programs: North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council **(\$1,430)** to support a free babysitting/CPR course for Lewis County

Youth ages 11 to 15; ICAN Bike Program (one-week) event (**\$1,170**) to support Lewis County youth with disabilities in learning how to ride a two-wheeled bike; Boy Scout Troop 162-(**1,000**) to defray cost of sending 24 scouts to summer camp/leadership training; Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County (**\$800**) to support “Wonder Wednesday” afterschool program, where “tweens” ages 10 to 13 learn about technology through a partnership with Lowville business “Lake Effect Tech”; and Lewis County Amateur Hockey Association (**\$600**) to purchase two new youth goalie helmets.

DID YOU KNOW”

Process for Applying for OCFS-Youth Development Funds and County Project Funds

A press release announcing the availability of funds is issued to the local media, school districts; and all who request an application. The release contains instruction on submitting an application to include a description of the activity/program to be funded; budget; and the approximate number of youth to be served. *(Applicants are invited to provide a brief verbal overview of their program/project at a scheduled board meeting however, per the Lewis County Youth Bureau By-Laws, the inability to provide a verbal presentation, does not exclude the applicant from consideration).* One week prior to the scheduled meeting, a summary of each application, along with a copy of each application is mailed to each board member with instruction to review and be prepared to ask any questions they may have of the applicants. The voting process for awarding funds is a simple majority of the membership present.

2017

COMMUNITY REQUESTS

The Youth Board receives invites throughout the year to participate in community events as well as requests for volunteering. Some of the 2017 community events that the Youth Bureau participated in included: Recording of radio spots on Moose Radio and marketing for the Northern Regional Center for Independent Living-Annual “Lewis County Walk for Wellness,” Recording of radio spots, assisting in marketing, and were actors in WWNYTV7 commercial for the Lewis County Planning Department – Seasonal Bus Runs to Old Forge; SUNY POLY Utica and Mohawk Community College; and the JCC Connector Route to Watertown; helped in recruitment of volunteers to assist at the 2017 Cream Cheese Festival; Lyons Falls Farmers Market-The Youth Bureau had an Informational Table at the June 27th market; recorded radio spots for the Annual “Lewis County Night Out” event and “Homeless Christmas Tree” Initiative; and Mountain View Prevention Services – YEAH! Youth Empowerment and Health, had requested the Youth Bureau to come up with Prom and Graduation video skits on the topic of Not drinking and driving. The mission of YEAH! is to reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Lewis County by collaborating with our community to empower residents to make educated decisions about living a healthy lifestyle. The prom video featured youth bureau student representatives and the graduation video featured youth bureau student representatives and Undersheriff Monnat. The videos were posted on the “Linking Lewis County” website from May – June 2017. A big thank you to Nick Altmire who recorded the Additionally, a representative of the Youth Bureau and a County Official, assisted Josh Fitzgerald, Owner of a local business (“Lake Effect Tech”), on August 19th by handing out backpack’s filled with school supplies to the general public. A total of 200 backpacks, were available. Mr. Fitzgerald, provided the Youth Bureau with 30 Backpacks to giveaway at the Annual “Lewis County Night Out” event,

and donated 20 backpack's, to the Department of Social Services to disburse to children. Beginning Black Friday through Christmas Eve, some Youth Bureau board members volunteered to ring the Salvation Army Bell during their "Red Kettle Drive." Monies raised in Lewis County are used to support economically vulnerable residents with food, shelter, and clothing.

Presentations

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



STUDENTS WHO ARE IN GOVERNMENT CLASSES AT THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT, MUST MEET A COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT. THEREFORE, THE YOUTH BUREAU REACHES OUT TO DISTRICTS, TO HELP STUDENT'S MEET THE REQUIREMENT BY PROVIDING THEM WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER AT A VARIETY OF YOUTH BUREAU EVENTS AND FOR OTHER COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING NEEDS

At the February 15, 2017 board meeting, Scott Mathys, CEO-Lewis County Opportunities, Inc., and Youth Bureau board member, talked about "homelessness in our community." At recent forums, it was brought to light, that 81 students were identified by Lewis County School Districts as homeless this year. The definition of "homeless" is dependent upon requirements of the data collection source, however the fact that there are students experiencing housing instability is concerning, especially when 17 of that 81 are students in kindergarten and first grade. There is a "Homeless Apartment" in Lewis County with the usage being 751 bed nights in 2017. This is in addition to other equally important problems facing our youth such as drug addiction, mental health issues, domestic violence, and sexual assault. While the situation can appear hopeless, we need to rise-up and take back our community. While the approach may be challenging, we can't sit back and let our inaction be the barrier to trying to make the community a better place.

After the presentation, Noah Ramer, Student Representative-Copenhagen Central, volunteered to assist in reaching out to school districts to come up with ideas in helping to make the community aware of the homelessness issue. At the March 21, 2017 Youth Bureau meeting, Noah reported that he had recruited other youth bureau student representative to assist, and presented on what they called "Project Self-ie." Mission Statement: Project Self-ie will be a program designed to help decrease homelessness and intergenerational disparity in Lewis County youth by increasing adolescents' self-esteem. The objective was to create a network of individuals who can help youth who are in need of emotional, physical, and mental assistance; increase the confidence and self-sufficiency, which in turn will decrease the amount of

intergenerational poverty in the county and reduce the number of case of minors being without a home. The program would primarily focus on self-worth and work in collaboration with other districts and youth. The program will encourage students to engage with presenters and be more willing to comprehend the message. Youth representatives may talk during these presentations – some may talk about relevant life experiences; discuss self-worth and how everyone can break the chain of their ancestors. At the end of presentation, students would be tasked to “take a selfie” of who they see when they look in the mirror. Noah had presented the project to Copenhagen Central School District who had advised him that the district would re-visit the project in the fall. **Noah’s appointment on the youth bureau ended in June 2017, however due to the importance of Project Self-ie, he was determined to reach out to his successors on the youth bureau to advocate for the implementation of the program at Copenhagen Elementary.**

2017 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 on their career pathway. Many youth lack the basic experience employers require, as it relates to attitude and behaviors necessary for them to succeed in a social work environment. This is why, it is so important that the Planning Department and the Youth Bureau continue to collaborate in supporting 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 Birnie Bus, the 7th year of this Seasonal Bus run to Old Forge for job opportunities and leisure, was a success. Youth and Adults age 14 years and older were able, to utilize busses to take those who secured employment at Water Safari to their orientation on June 3, 2017. Cost to utilize public transportation was \$1.00 each way. This seasonal program began June 29, 2017 and ran through August 16, 2017. The bus pick-up schedule included: Josh’s Riverside Restaurant in Croghan, Tops Plaza in Lowville and Boonville, BOCES in Glenfield, Edge Hotel in Lyons Falls, Lock 96 in Port Leyden, as well as various locations in Boonville and Woodgate. The Planning Department started with 2 buses earlier this year than expected, due to high ridership numbers in the beginning of the season. The total Season Ridership was 5,596 Passengers (up from 5,509 last year). The rainy weather towards the end of the season did contribute to the lack of growth that the Planning Department hoped for, but nonetheless, they still had more riders than last year. The Youth Bureau annually, assist with the promotion and marketing of this seasonal program by recording radio spots, and promoting the program in school districts and throughout the county.

“Homeless Christmas Tree” Initiative

“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 6th Annual “Homeless Christmas

Tree” initiative that began November 22, 2017 through December 22, 2017. Thank you to the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, who have for the past three years, displayed the “Homeless Christmas Tree” in there, window, where it is visible for all to see. 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 2017 forty (40) plus bins were provided to those in need. Additionally, in 2017 donations from the initiative helped 3 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. Due to the generosity of our community during last year’s initiative, we still have a good supply of some items, therefore, this year, we did not advertise the initiative as much as we historically have, therefore we asked for specific items such personal hygiene and baby items. Again, this year Fausta Post who oversees a youth group from St. Peter’s Church in Lowville, collected, donations and made “Blessing Bags.” The “Blessing Bags” contain personal hygiene items, bottled water, socks, and more; Parishioners at St. Peters Roman Catholic Church in Lowville, donated an overwhelming array of baby items, diapers, clothing and more; the 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Club raised monies that they provided to the initiative (monetary donations are used to replenish personal hygiene, kitchen, and bath supplies as needed); and Carlie Watson, Program Coordinator for NCPPC and who has an office at Lowville Academy, reported that her Youth Leadership Group, decided that they wanted to assist with collecting donations for the “Homeless Christmas Tree” initiative. Carlie stated “Out of nowhere on December 13, 2017, three classes of 1st graders showed up at my office door. Instead of doing their regular holiday gift exchange, they decided this year to bring in donations for the Youth Bureau’s Homeless Christmas Tree Initiative. So, I had probably 50 first graders all bubbling with Christmas spirit in my hallway this morning, so happy to be giving. Made my day.” Additionally, so many other community members, businesses, churches, school districts, clubs, agencies and County Government staff supported the initiative. On December 27th at the Youth Bureau membership, along with community members, and the Lewis County Cooperative Extension-4-H youth, sorted and packed up the donated items. *A very special thank you to the Lewis County Maintenance Department who assist us each year in packing up and delivering the donated items to DSS and the Lowville Food Pantry where the items are stored and are readily available for those in need.*

2017

Recognition of Youth Bureau Student Representatives and Community Representative

At the June 2017 Youth Bureau meeting, the Youth Bureau recognized and honored the following Student Representatives and a Community Member of the Youth Board whose term of appointment ended June 30, 2017:

- Grace Metzler-Lowville Academy, who served from August 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017
- Dustin Snyder-Copenhagen Central, who served from June 7, 2016 to June 30, 2017
- Noah Ramer-Copenhagen Central, who served from June 7, 2016 to June 30, 2017
- Shawn Shaw-Beaver River Central, who served from July 7, 2016 to June 30, 2017
- Camille Ledoux-Beaver River Central, who served from June 7, 2016 to June 30, 2017
- Reegan Domagala-South Lewis, who served from June 7, 2016 to June 30, 2017
- Mary Martin-Community Member, who served from May 25, 2015 to June 30, 2017

Letter

Submitted by Scott Mathys, Youth Bureau Board Member and Former Chairperson

I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with all the members of the Lewis County Youth Board. Together, I believe the impact of this advisory board is far reaching in our community. Throughout this annual report there are numerous examples of that impact. One of the particular projects from this past year that I'm especially honored to have been a part of, was the Lewis County Night Out event. This year the event recognized our local ambulance teams. Our mostly volunteer ambulance teams are on the frontline on the opioid epidemic. More than a National problem, it's here in Lewis County affecting our community directly and indirectly. The ambulance teams see people in dire need. The Lewis County Night Out event helped recognize those efforts. Overall, the event 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.

I'm always very proud of our student members; each positively representing their school and self. This group made difficult decision in 2017 as we tackled challenging funding objectives. They learned and practiced giving the due diligence necessary to allocate limited youth funds to their best use in Lewis County. The results are apparent throughout this annual report. I truly enjoyed our student representatives; witnessing firsthand their authentic civic engagement that comes from this volunteer capacity. I also appreciate the community members of the Youth Board. It's inspiring to have our students see that involvement and interest from the various stakeholder agencies and compassionate community members. It's their voice, wisdom, and guidance that is essential for the civic-minded growth of our youth. Your commitment doesn't go unnoticed. Finally, it is always a privilege to work with our Youth Bureau Director, Penny Demo. She is diligent and extremely dedicated to youth matters in our community and to the Youth Board as a whole. Thank you to all those working with youth in our community. I look forward to 2018 and whatever challenges it brings.

Letter

Submitted by: John Exford-Co-Chairperson of the Lewis County Youth Bureau

I have been a member of the Lewis County Youth Bureau for the last several years, being the chairperson or co-chairperson for at least three years. It is with great pleasure to serve the community in this position as, a way to give back to a place that has been so important to me. The youth representatives are empowered to help the citizens of Lewis County and to make important decisions that affect the well-being of our residents. I am proud of the cohesiveness of our board to be able to provide the youth of our community the opportunities to grow and become productive citizens of Lewis County.

Letter

Submitted by: Jacob Hartle-Co-Chairperson and Student Representative-Harrisville Central School

I chose to be on the Lewis County Youth Bureau after current member, Jurnee Allen approached me and requested I join the board. Being appointed to the board has enabled me to impact the lives of the children in our community. After around six months on the board, the positions of chairperson and vice chairperson became open. The By-Laws were changed to allow for Co-Chairperson vs. a Chairperson

position. I applied, and myself and John Exford were voted in as Co-Chairs. To be on the Youth Bureau not only looks good for college applications, it also helps me make a difference in our community through our allocation of funds to programs such as the "I Can bike program" that teaches disabled youth and adults to ride bicycles and the Beaver River Central Schools-Therapy Dog Program.

Letter

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

It continues to be an honor and pleasure to work with each and every one of the members of the Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board. In their role, they make challenging decisions on funding quality youth programs despite the possibility of a decrease of funding from year to year. I applaud all of them for their diligence in attending meetings, for their perspective on reviewing and funding applications, for engaging in discussions, monitoring programs that we fund, and for their commitment and dedication in serving on the Youth Bureau board.

During our annual meeting in June, we celebrated and honored the following Community Member and Student Representatives, whose term on the board ended June 30, 2017: **Community Member:** Mary Martin; and **Student Representatives:** Grace Metzler-Lowville Academy; Dustin Snyder and Noah Ramer-Copenhagen; Shawn Shaw and Camille Ledoux-Beaver River; and Reagan Domagala-South Lewis. We recognized and thanked Scott Mathys, whose term as Chairperson on the board ended, however he continues to serve on the board. Scott is a true advocate for our community and has been and continues to be a positive role model for me and the entire youth bureau membership...Thank you Scott. I also want to thank the Youth Bureau's Legislative Committee: Roscoe Fawcett, Andrea Moroughan, and Greg Kulzer for their commitment in attending meetings and for their guidance and genuine concern for youth. We also welcomed our new Co-Chairs: John Exford-Community Member and Jacob Hartle-Student Representative from Harrisville and new Student Representatives including: Jacob Hartle-Harrisville; Kristin Moshier-Lowville Academy; Karrigen Aubin and Victoria Boliver-Beaver River; Elizabeth McGuire-South Lewis; Annabelle Atnip and Kimmy Dolan-Copenhagen Central. ***Without the diverse makeup of Community; Government; Non-Government; and Student Representatives who serve on the Youth Bureau Board, we would not be able to make the difficult youth funding decisions that we make.***

My hope is that when our board member's terms expire that they take away a sense of pride, and accomplishment in knowing that they made a difference for so many youth, throughout our county, as well as 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 together in partnership.

I look forward to working with all of you in 2018. I sincerely thank all of you for volunteering to serve on the board. You are all very much appreciated.

For additional information regarding the Lewis County Youth Bureau, please visit our website at www.lewiscounty.org

