

Lewiston Youth Advisory Council Wants to Educate Others About the “New Lewiston”



September 8, 2017

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LEWISTON: At the first official meeting of the 2017-2018 Lewiston Youth Advisory Council on September 7th, conversation ensued regarding what people truly know about Lewiston. During the group’s August orientation, they discussed the many offerings and activities that Lewiston has today but how some individuals, both locally and away, aren’t aware of or have misconceptions about the Lewiston of today.

Believing that Lewiston has greatly evolved throughout the years, the meeting focused on what can they do to spotlight the Lewiston of today. Brainstorming resulted in planning for a public education initiative about **“The New Lewiston.”** Instead of just **telling** people that Lewiston is a wonderful place to be, they want others to **truly understand** that and want to reach different aged audiences with that message during their tenure.

Citing Lewiston’s low crime rate, many restaurants, parks, famous people native to Lewiston, and annual events, second year LYAC member Emma Williams notes, *“We’re excited to work on some public education, as we want people to really know how great it is here.”*

Hunter Landry, a new member to the youth council, noted, *“I don’t like how Lewiston’s reputation is sometimes talked about and perceived by others. To me, Lewiston is Portland without the coast. There is a lot to do here.”*

Carolyn Adams, who hopes to one day be a photo journalist, chimed in with a positive that she’d photographed earlier in the day. She had talked with a local woman who was sharing positive thoughts on a piece of cardboard, *“I was excited about that, as we need to focus on our positives, not negativity about our own city.”*

Group members are going to research more things about Lewiston and plan for a **“What Do You Know About Lewiston” trivia night**, where local residents can compete, in group fashion, by answering questions that Lewiston Youth Advisory Council members will ask about Lewiston.

Carolyn, for instance, wonders if people are aware that a young woman who was widely touted in the news for developing her own fashion line now lives in Lewiston. Lewiston native Marsden Hartley, a renowned artist/poet, is highlighted through the Marsden Hartley Cultural Center at the Lewiston Public Library; the group wondered if people know that. Do people know the name of the food provision boxes in downtown Lewiston, that being Edible Lewiston.

New LYAC member Emma Wolverton mentioned hearing how in some communities people paint rocks with positive messages for community placement. She added that perhaps attendees at the upcoming trivia night could paint Lewiston-focused facts, places, and messages on rocks for community distribution.

The trivia night date and time will be announced in the near future, and LYAC will offer a Lewiston restaurant gift card for the winner.

LYAC was established by the Lewiston City Council in 2001, meeting for the first time in 2002. Since then, it has been recognized locally, at the state level, and at the national level for its innovation and creativity. Recent campaigns have been a positive image campaign entitled Do You Do Lew, a T.A.L.K. positive communication campaign ranging from politics to community interaction, and the filming of a “We Love Lewiston” video with elementary school children. Additional information about LYAC can be found at www.lewistonmaine.gov/lyac LYAC is funded annually by the Lewiston Firefighters Association.

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