

Media Contact:

Marisa Markowski
(262) 671-2208
mmarkowski@kenoshaunitedway.org

PRESS RELEASE

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**Youth As Resources, Funded by United Way of Kenosha County,
Accepts Service Award Applications and Recruits Members**

January 20, 2022 (Kenosha, WI) — United Way of Kenosha County (UWKC), mobilizing the caring power of our community, and in partnership with University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, is excited to continue the Youth As Resources (YAR) '22-'23 funding cycle. YAR funds community service projects in Kenosha County with youth speaking up for and addressing community needs most important to them.

Currently, YAR is accepting applications for youth-led community service projects. Local youth in grades K-12 are encouraged to apply to receive up to \$500 to complete their project. There are two more funding opportunities available this school year. The upcoming deadline for students to apply for a YAR grant is on Friday, February 17th. The final '22-'23 grant application will become available in March with a deadline of Friday, March 17th. Students can apply for funding by visiting: kenosha.extension.wisc.edu/youth/yar.



Youth As Resources board members gather for their monthly meeting to discuss award funding.

“During my time on the Youth As Resources Board, I have gained many valuable leadership skills that will last a lifetime,” says Abbey Proctor, YAR President and twelfth grade student. “My involvement with YAR has also allowed me to see firsthand the impact that youth can have on their community - it is amazing what can be accomplished when youth are given a voice and the means to create positive change.”

The YAR Board consists of nine high school members and three adult members, with all executive officer positions being fulfilled by student members. The program fosters complete youth involvement, including not only leading the approved service projects but also reviewing and allocating grant funds.

Last semester, roughly 1.5 thousand dollars was awarded across six service projects. The recipients of the 2022-2023 YAR grants include:

Concerned Citizens Coalition: Teen Task Force: "Coleman Chapel Blessing Box" Project

Josiah Reinholz with Kenosha County Parks: "Bristol Woods Hammock Wheel" Project

Kenosha Trailblazers 4-H Club: "Spreading Warmth" Project

Mahone Middle School: "Leopold Benches-Weather Proof Table-Tops & Tool Storage Shed" Project

Westosha Central High School National Honor Society: "Keep Kenosha Warm" Project

Westosha Central High School Key Club: "Together We Rise Duffle Bag Donations" Project

Youth as Resources is made possible by a partnership between United Way of Kenosha County and University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension.

"Youth As Resources is an incredible opportunity for youth in our community to develop their skills and make a difference," says Erica Ness, Positive Youth Development Educator, at Extension Kenosha County. "This program is proof that youth are both our present and our future. They are ready to step up and lead now, and I am proud to coordinate a program that supports them to do so."



Youth As Resources board members volunteered at the ELCA Outreach Center's Holiday party.

YAR is also currently recruiting youth applicants to join next year's board. Teachers and other adults can nominate students to receive an application through Wednesday, February 15. Student applications will be accepted through Tuesday, April 11. More information is available online at kenosha.extension.wisc.edu/youth/yar.

"For more than 10 years, United Way of Kenosha County and University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension have partnered with Youth as Resources to help bring student ideas to life," says Carolynn Friesch, Chief Executive Officer at UWKC. "YAR provides an unforgettable opportunity to inspire and empower youth to make change in our community."

For more information, to get a grant application, or to get involved, visit: kenosha.extension.wisc.edu/youth/yar or contact Erica Ness at erica.ness@wisc.edu.

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About UWKC

United Way of Kenosha County fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person. For almost 100 years, UWKC has created positive change throughout Kenosha County by mobilizing the caring power of the community, improving lives, and striving for lasting, positive transformation. Through partnerships and collaborations, UWKC both supports local initiatives with an annual community investment process and manages programs such as Readers are Leaders, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, SingleCare Prescription Discounts and more.

About YAR

Kenosha County Youth as Resources was developed out of a need – a need to make the youth of Kenosha County feel more connected to their community. YAR is youth-led board and a grant-giving program that funds youth-designed community service projects in Kenosha County. Youth, with

United Way of Kenosha County
5500 6th Ave, Suite 210
Kenosha, WI 53140
(262) 658-4104
www.kenoshaunitedway.org

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guidance from adults, design projects to address a community need and apply to YAR grants, which are awarded up to \$500 to fund supplies for the project. The Youth as Resources Board reads all applications, invites youth groups to present project proposals, and allocates funds. For more information, visit kenosha.extension.wisc.edu/youth/yar.

About UW-Madison Division of Extension

UW-Madison Extension is a Division of the University that fosters mutual education between Wisconsin communities and the University. With a Community Development team in nearly every county, Extension's outreach creates key connection points for families, communities, businesses, non-profit organizations, government, and more. Extension supports local volunteers and leaders to take action and serve as role models in their communities, making sure Wisconsinites have the latest research, best practices, and educational opportunities available. Locally, Extension Kenosha County is a partnership between UW-Madison and the Kenosha County Government. The Youth Development program in Kenosha County coordinates initiative such as 4-H, Youth As Resources, Youth In Governance, Nia, and more."