



FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

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Florida League of Cities Announces Municipal Youth Council Community Service Contest Winners

Alachua, Fort Pierce and West Park recognized for volunteer service projects

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TALLAHASSEE, FL – The **Florida League of Cities (FLC)**, the united voice for Florida’s municipal governments, announced the winners of the 2023 Municipal Youth Council Community Service Contest. The annual competition showcases community service projects performed by municipal youth councils that successfully address specific needs in their local communities.

Municipal youth councils are special councils that typically serve as advisory board to the local governments. They are composed of high school students within the city and are sometimes referred to as youth corps, teen advisory boards or mayor’s youth councils.

“It is inspiring to see our future leaders taking action and making a positive impact in their communities,” said **FLC President Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor** for the **City of Port St. Lucie**. “The Florida League of Cities is proud of the work these students are doing to support and improve their cities. On behalf of the League, congratulations to this year’s contest winners!”

This year’s contest winners are:

- **City of Alachua Youth Advisory Council**
- **City of Fort Pierce Youth Council**
- **City of West Park Youth Council**

The Alachua Youth Advisory Council partnered with the Alachua County Quilt Remembrance Project through the Equal Justice Initiative to construct a publicly displayed quilt to remember lynching victims in the Alachua area. The victims were represented with embroidered name blocks and quotes, which gave a voice to those whose voices were taken. The Youth Council played a major role in the planning, embroidering and quilting process with guidance from well-established quilters in the area. The students designed several of the name blocks, and the color of the embroidery threads chosen by a Youth Council member are the colors in the City’s emblem. The quilt is currently displayed in the City Hall front lobby.

The Fort Pierce Youth Council planned, coordinated and hosted the EMPOWER YOUTH! community event in partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County, Indian River State College and the Children’s Services Council. The event aimed to empower and educate local youth about financial

literacy, mental health, career development and future planning in a conference-like setting. It addressed issues and concerns encountered by their peers. Youth Council members worked diligently to promote the event, secure sponsorships, garner community support and engage youth from diverse backgrounds. Their efforts resulted in the event surpassing their goal of 100 attendees. The event provided an environment where youth were equipped with skills to help them advance. Parents/guardians were provided tools to help youth achieve their goals by introducing them to the wealth of resources available in the community.

The City of West Park Youth Council hosted a hygiene product collection to assist youths experiencing homelessness in Broward County. Youth Council members collected items such as moist towelettes, feminine products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, face wipes, shampoo and body lotion. Each member contributed by donating at least five items and collecting items from family members, neighbors and friends. Youth Council members created and posted flyers throughout offices and city parks. They also placed several donation boxes at these sites. All donations are hand delivered to local shelters run by the Children's Home Society of Florida – Broward. The Youth Council plans to continue the collection and make donations to other shelters in the area.

Contest winners will receive a trophy and be featured by the League's award-winning magazine, Quality Cities (QC), as well as on the League's website and social media outlets.

For more information on the winning projects, visit flcities.com/youthcouncils.

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Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida's cities, which are formed and governed by their citizens. The League believes in "Local Voices Making Local Choices," which focuses on the impact citizens and city leaders have in improving Florida's communities. For more information, visit flcities.com.