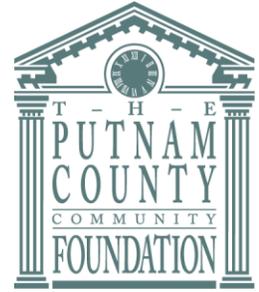


## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Headline: Youth Philanthropy Committee Reports Grants By Braden Pershing and Ben Wilkerson

**GREENCASTLE, INDIANA- March 11, 2017** Over the past 9 months, the Putnam County Youth Philanthropy Committee has approved eight grants for projects led by students in the county. The Youth Philanthropy Committee is a program of the Putnam County Community Foundation to encourage student leadership and philanthropy.

Each grant project is unique and helps the youth in our community make an impact in their own way. The grant projects include North Putnam High School Key Club's "Night Without a Home," funding for new materials for Greencastle High School Robotics Club, renovations at Jaycee park, tree identification at Camp Friend, playground renovations at Camp Friend, Fern Cliff maintenance, and sun safety shelters for the Greencastle High School soccer field.

During the summer of 2016, Whitney Wienshenk had the goal to raise awareness of skin cancer throughout the community for her Girl Scout Gold Award project. She advocated the necessity of using sunscreen and the need for precautions for one's skin, especially for young sports players. Playing soccer for hours in the sun with little to no shade gave Whitney the idea to build sun safety shelters at the Greencastle High School soccer field. With the help of many community partners and a \$500 grant from the Youth Philanthropy Committee, soccer players can get out of the sun and have the protection of the new shelters.

Miranda Williams, a member of Venture Crew 93, also has an interest in the outdoors. She wanted the public to appreciate the diversity of trees at Camp Friend. A Youth Philanthropy grant of \$500 allowed her to complete her Summit Award project, which resulted in the identification of nearly two dozen tree species with durable signage complete with QR codes. Camp Friend now allows for a more immersive experience and is a great place for leaf collectors to find leaves!

Signs were not the only great project at Camp Friend. Nick Duggan is leading a project to install a playground for his Eagle Scout project. He came to the committee with a detailed plan and a clear vision. With the help of a \$500 grant from the Youth Philanthropy Committee, Camp Friend will have a new playground that will be enjoyed by kids for decades to come.

Across the other side of the county, another determined student wanted to give his time to help restore a natural wonder. Craig Helmers was on a mission for Eagle Scout status. Craig chose to give a much needed face lift to Fern Cliff. During his interview with the committee, he gave a

heart-felt presentation of the condition of the park, showing unstable shelters, eroded trails, and an entrance that was poorly marked. Craig was granted \$500, and a few months later his project was finished. Now Fern Cliff has clear trails, a beautiful entrance, and a family friendly environment.

Part of Sean Ramey's Eagle Scout project was to restore a shelter in Jaycee Park. He did just that after receiving a \$500 grant from the committee. With the help of his troop members and other volunteers, Sean has restored and made the shelter durable and easily accessible for all to enjoy.

The youth philanthropy committee doesn't just help scout members. We provide our resources to many youth members and clubs who want to make a difference in our community. The North Putnam High School Key Club has a wonderful program meant to raise awareness of the struggles homeless people face every day. Last year "Night Without a Home" featured a guest speaker who gave up all of his possessions to become homeless so he could truly understand the issue. Participants in the event slept out on the North Putnam High School football field in cardboard boxes in the rain. The Key Club is looking to expand the event and the number of students that it reaches. With a \$500 grant towards their effort, it is sure to be even more successful.

Finally, the Greencastle High School and Middle School recently added a new Robotics Club. This club was started to expand creative thinking and mechanical ingenuity. Nick Seaman, one of the founders of Robotics Club, met with the committee to seek funding for robotics kits. After receiving a \$500 grant, the Robotics Club was able to purchase these kits, furthering students in their mechanical learning and allowing members to compete in robotics competitions.

The Putnam County Youth Philanthropy Committee is comprised of students from each of the county's four high schools who exhibit leadership and a desire to serve. Members of the 2016-2017 Youth Philanthropy Committee are Kaelynn Abner, Whitney Boswell, Lois Cheatham, Ben Gellman, Eric Hinkle, Hannah Long, Lyndi Parent, Braden Pershing, Mary Timm, Madison Trout, Rose White, Annika Whitlock and Ben Wilkerson.

We greatly encourage any youth/student members of the Putnam County community who want to make a difference to apply for a grant. Applications may be found online at [www.pcfoundation.org](http://www.pcfoundation.org). For more information about the Youth Philanthropy program at the Community Foundation, please contact Dean Gambill at 765-653-4978. Together, we can make a difference.

*The Putnam County Community Foundation is a nonprofit public charity established in 1985 to help donors establish endowments, award grants, and provide leadership, enriching the quality of life and strengthening community in Putnam County. The Community Foundation has been entrusted with more than 279 funds and endowments for donors, supporting a variety of charitable purposes. To learn how to start your own endowment, visit [www.pcfoundation.org](http://www.pcfoundation.org) or contact the office at 765.653.4978.*

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