

YOUTH TESTIMONIALS

Grace Condon

What is your favorite program at the Armory?

The summer camps are fun. My favorite was the hiking camp. It was a good way to meet new people and socialize.

How long have you been coming to the Armory?

About four months.

What would you say to students that have never been to the Armory?

It fun and you should try it if you haven't!

What is your favorite thing about being at the Armory?

The people!



The mission of the Armory Youth Project is to provide a safe environment where young people can build community

and be encouraged in their educational, emotional, physical and Christian spiritual development.



Fruit Pizza, Cooking Class



Origami, Crafting with Rose



Wilderness Safety Course, part of Summer Camps

Armory Youth Project Hosts Showcase Fundraising Breakfast and Raises \$55,000

Manistee community members came together on September 16 to learn more about the Armory Youth Project (AYP). Approximately 75 people attended the event which focused on the impact that AYP is having on area youth while helping them realize their potential. One donor challenged the group with a match up to \$15,000 and the attendees rose to the challenge donating and pledging over \$55,000.



Carly Bailey, Director of Youth Services, 19th Judicial Circuit Manistee & Benzie County, and Amy Wojciechowski, PH.D., Executive Director.



"We are so grateful for our friends and supporters of the Armory Youth Project and their commitment to helping us raise funds critical to our day-to-day operations," stated Wojciechowski. "We wake up every day focusing on finding funds to allow us to deliver on our mission. Having a matching donation option always adds a bit of incentive so donors can double their impact. We are thankful for the community's support," she said.

WellnesteD, T.J's Pub and Bake My Day were local businesses who contributed to the event. Thank you! Donors who are interested in learning more may access the Armory newsletters at armoryyouthproject.com/about and may donate online at: armoryyouthproject.com/donate. For more information, contact Amy at director@armoryyouthproject.com or by calling 231-299-1205.

Manistee, MI 49660

555 1st Street

YOUTH PROJECT



Offering Free After-School Programming for Students in Grades 6-12

Dear Armory Supporter,

The Armory Youth Project (AYP) offers summer and free after-school programs to students in 6th-12th grade. We continue to focus on delivering on our mission to provide a safe environment where young people can build community and be encouraged in their educational, emotional, physical, and Christian spiritual development.

This summer, we launched AYP Summer Camps. The week-long camps featured a different adventure each week and were filled to capacity with over 95 Manistee County Youth participating. The camps included art, disc golf, hiking, wilderness safety, beach safety, safe sitter, food safety, outdoor adventures, and cooking classes.

Also, this summer marked our first year as a participant in the USDA Summer Food Service Program. We served free lunch and snacks to over 450 Manistee County youth. The program ran Monday through Friday, June 13 – August 19, and included access to the open gym and bay games.

We are excited about the fall lineup of our after-school programs that run Monday – Friday and include free dinner and snacks. Students can take advantage of some favorites such as garden club, Empower, disc golf, archery tag, table tennis, tutoring, music, art, Pickleball, Young Life Club and middle school dances. We have also launched new offerings including food safety, hiking, Young Life Campaigners, create & craft, Second Sunday Youth Group, movies & popcorn, and more!

Our youth at the AYP are awesome kids who are developing critical life skills through our programs, and it is all made possible through the generosity of our community. Overall, the fundraising efforts never stop for our 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that is not supported by federal, state, or local funds year after year. Our donors are our primary source of income, and we work to reach as many revenue sources as possible to implement our strategy and deliver on our mission. We have received grants over the past two years and continue to apply for grants to help support our annual operating budget of \$200,000.

Please consider supporting AYP for Giving Tuesday by making your gift on our online donation form or by sending a check in the enclosed envelope. Donations of any size will make an impact on our ability to help serve our youth. You can do a one-time or multi-year donation or become a part of our monthly giving team. For more information or to donate online, go to www.armoryyouthproject.com/donate.

It truly does take a village and we are thankful for the great staff, volunteers, and donors for their commitment and support and the grants we have received that together help make what we do possible.

Amy Wojciechowski, Executive Director

5th Grade Day at the Armory Youth Project

Armory Youth Project (AYP) is open to students in the 6th-12th grade and this year the AYP staff took a new approach to give exposure to AYP programs for incoming 6th graders through the 5th Grade Days. This proved to be fun and energizing for staff, volunteers and students. Over 75 kids participated from Manistee Area Public Schools, 25-30 from Onkama Schools and approximately 20 students from Manistee Catholic Central. The students were registered as part of the visit with many asking if they could come back to AYP immediately.



According to Wojciechowski, “the kids had an absolute blast and so did the staff and volunteers!” The 5th graders were divided into groups and rotated through 20 minute segments of pickleball, disc golf, cooking, art, and time in the open bay area.

“Our goal was to give them a little taste of all the Armory has to offer,” stated Wojciechowski. “I think we met our goal and we definitely plan to hold these again next spring,” she said. “When the Onkama bus left, many of the kids were waving out the windows and the driver honked the horn the entire length of the parking lot.”



The vision of the Armory Youth Project is to create a flourishing youth culture in Manistee County where every person feels valued, finds a pathway to opportunity, and has the tools to realize a more promising future.

The Armory is a safe place for teens to hang out, have fun and be supported. Come join us!

The Armory Youth Project is a 501c3 non-profit.

555 1st St. Manistee, MI 49660 | 231-299-1205 | armoryyouthproject.com

YOUTH TESTIMONIALS

Cameron Wilson

What is your favorite program at the Armory?

Hiking Camp was my favorite. I liked being outdoors and we got to see and do a lot of cool stuff. We saw a baby porcupine walking across the trail right in front of us!



How long have you been coming to the Armory? About two months.

What would you say to students that have never been to the Armory?

They should come try it out. There’s always something fun and new to do. I’ve never come here and been bored.

What is your favorite thing about being at the Armory?

Playing basketball.

New AYP Video Now Available!



The Armory Youth Project has launched a short video that captures the highlights from the last year. Check it out at armoryyouthproject.com!



“It’s been enjoyable seeing all the positive energy the kids have! It feels good to be part of an agency that gives so many opportunities to the kids. The staff have been very helpful and kind.”

Volunteer,
Theresa Patnoudé



Exchange student Lila Toune is from Angouleme, France. She said, “Yes to the dress!” Toune is staying with Paula Laws in Manistee.

The Prom Boutique Opens at the Armory

Photo Credit Paula Laws

We are excited to announce that the Prom Boutique is now being offered by the Armory Youth Project (AYP). The Prom Boutique provides students from area high schools an opportunity to borrow prom and homecoming dresses, shoes, and accessories at no charge. For the last 15 years, this service was supported by the United Way and was staffed by a dedicated group of volunteers working out of the Briny Building. When the boutique was looking for a new home, AYP stepped up to take over this important service.

Over 1,200 dresses and many accessories were relocated to the Armory over the summer and students have already taken advantage of the boutique’s offerings. To register for a Prom Boutique appointment during selected times of the year, students should visit armoryyouthproject.com and then meet with volunteers at the Armory on their chosen shopping date.

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You shop. Amazon gives.

You can help the Armory Youth Project at no extra charge to you by choosing smile. amazon.com when you shop online.

By doing that simple step first, .05% of your eligible purchase price will be donated to the Armory at no extra cost to you!



The AYP is also participating in the Family Fare Direct Your Dollars Program. We are collecting receipts which will be

turned in for a cash donation. So keep AYP in mind when shopping, you can drop your receipts off at the AYP office or in the bucket in the entry hall.