

# armory

## YOUTH PROJECT

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

## New Donation Match Opportunity

### Double your donation to the AYP!

Why would a woman without any children be drawn to give to the Armory Youth Project? Great question. I am Pat Lynett, a retired business executive and social worker. My husband, Jim Hanson, a Manistee native, and I purchased a home in Manistee in 1997 in order to take advantage of Lake Michigan boating. During the social work segment of my career, I saw the challenges that teen girls experienced when their families alone could not overcome the impact of poverty, discrimination, and violence. These teens had very few adult relationships that could encourage and support them in creative, character development, and simply fun, safe activities.



The youth of Manistee County are not isolated from the impact of low family income, self-harm and suicidal thoughts, negative peer pressure, and unsafe situations as indicated in recent Manistee News Advocate articles. As a Christian, I strive to be generous with my resources and time. I have focused on the AYP because I believe, and research confirms, that positive adult guidance is the most important experience leading to teen success. Furthermore, AYP youth can participate in a wide range of activities that provide new opportunities for success and hopefulness about what the future will bring – creative writing and art, new sports, such as archery and pickleball, self-sufficiency skills, like car repair and cooking, among many others.

I believe, every child deserves a community of support and a safe, exciting haven focused on their individual path to positive self-worth. As a donor over the past 10 years, please join me in supporting the Armory Youth Project. With every new donation you make before June 30, your donation will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$8,000.

Your gift will help support our mission to provide a safe environment where young people in 6th -12th grades can build community and be encouraged in their educational, emotional, physical, and Christian spiritual development. This gift will go directly to the programs and services AYP offers to our Manistee County students.

**Check out our summer camps inside!**



### Armory Youth Project Awarded a \$3,000 Grant from House of Flavors, Inc.

The Armory Youth Project (AYP) was presented with a \$3,000 grant from the House of Flavors, Inc. in support of the Armory's mission to provide a safe environment where young people in grades 6-12 can be encouraged in their educational, emotional, physical, and Christian spiritual development.

"House of Flavors is honored to be able to continue our partnership with the Armory Youth Project," said Dominic J Garza, Chief Operating Officer of House of Flavors. According to Dianna Wall, AYP Fund Development Coordinator, "We are extremely grateful for the House of Flavors continued support of Manistee County youth. This grant will go directly to the programs and services offered to our students."



Pictured from left to right: Karen Bruchan (AYP), Dianna Wall (AYP) and Dominic J. Garza, COO of House of Flavors Inc.





## **CAMPS** at the Armory

We are gearing up for another great summer of engaging experiences through our Armory Youth Project (AYP) summer camps. The camps are open to students entering grades 6-12 in the fall of 2023. Each camp runs from Monday – Thursday. There is no fee for students. Registration is required and can be completed at: [armoryyouthproject.com/programsforstudents](http://armoryyouthproject.com/programsforstudents).

### **June 12 - Entrepreneurship Camp**

Kick off the summer with a week of learning the “ins and outs” of running a business! Learn about good business practices, marketing, and sales plans. Start the summer learning how to be your own boss!

### **June 19 - Taste of Manistee Cooking Camp**

Spend the week whipping up delicious dishes and tasting your work! Each day will feature a cooking lesson led by chefs from your favorite restaurants.

### **June 26 - Hiking Camp**

This week we'll get outside and enjoy the great outdoors! Join us for a morning of hiking trails and exploring some of the amazing parks located nearby.

### **July 10 - Pet Care Camp**

Come learn all about caring for the soft and fluffy members of your family! Each day will focus on a different aspect of owning and caring for a pet, such as grooming, vet care, and first aid. Pet experts from local rescues will also be on hand to share their knowledge and answer questions!

### **July 17 - Art Camp**

Get your creative juices flowing! Students will have the chance to learn different styles of art and techniques from various local artists.

### **July 24 - Outdoor Survival & Safety Camp**

Do you enjoy being outside? Do you know what to do if the unexpected happens while you are enjoying the outdoors? Join us this week to learn all about wilderness safety and survival skills.

### **July 26 - July 30 - Young Life Camp**

Young Life Camp at Timber Wolf Lake in Lake City provides a great week in a kid's life! Students can zip line, drive go-carts, play basketball, swim, do a water obstacle course, and so much more! Kids are able to get away from the pressures of everyday life to have fun with their friends and Young Life Leaders, all while hearing the message of God's love for them.

For more information, contact Luke Trombley at 989-513-7596 or [LukeTrombley.YL@gmail.com](mailto:LukeTrombley.YL@gmail.com). The cost is \$575, but Young Life will be fundraising to help cover the costs for participants. Registration Link: <https://mi279.younglife.events/twlwk10mi279>

### **July 31 - Sports Camp**

Lace-up your sneakers and grab some friends for this week of fun playing sports! Each day will focus on learning a different sport led by local experts. Learn a new game or hone your skills in your favorite sport!

### **August 7 - Maker's Market Camp**

Love working with your hands? This week we will spend time getting crafty with Jill! From things like wild art and calligraphy, each day will feature a different project.

### **August 14 - Teen Cuisine Cooking Camp**

Bring your appetite! We're wrapping up our summer camps with a week of cooking with Caitlin from MSU Extension. Students will go from the garden to the kitchen and see what it takes to bring a “Farm to Table” meal to life!





## AYP Student presented her poem at the National Writers Series event in Traverse City

Lola Piper, a senior at Manistee High School, read her poem “This Is Not About a Label” at the Traverse City Opera House as part of a National Writers Series event. Lola attended the Raising Writers Creative Writing Workshop with Lauren Carlson, held at the Armory Youth Project (AYP) in January and February.

Lauren, a local poet, partnered with the National Writers Series to offer these creative writing classes for middle and high school students at the AYP.

Lola’s poem opened the program that featured author and broadcaster Alvin Hall (*Driving The Green Book* published by Harper One). Ticket sales from author events go to supporting Raising Writers Classes, such as those hosted by the Armory Youth Project.

Due to the success of the first Raising Writers Creative Writing Workshop, Carlson agreed to come back to host another set of workshops in April.

AYP would like to congratulate Lola on this honor.

## 5th-Grade Orientation

In May, AYP welcomes all Manistee County fifth graders for orientation sessions led by staff and volunteers. Students learn about the wide variety of opportunities for recreation and personal development through pickleball, art, disc golf, cooking and games.



## New Kitchen Manager Joins the AYP Team

The Armory Youth Project recently hired a kitchen manager to take the reins of the kitchen. Jason McClellan started as a volunteer in 2022 after moving to the area from Florida. His passion for planning and serving good and nutritious meals has played an important role in

dramatically increasing the number of students eating dinner. Jason spends his days cooking, cleaning, organizing, and creating delicious meal plans for the students. “I thoroughly enjoy being able to make sure the kids at the AYP have a healthy snack and meal,” said McClellan. “I am proud that at the AYP we focus on teaching kids important life skills such as how to plan and prepare meals”.

## Business Sponsorship Opportunities

The AYP has launched a Sponsorship Program and is partnering with local businesses to market their businesses to our AYP parents, students, and the community. For information visit [www.armoryyouthproject.com/donate](http://www.armoryyouthproject.com/donate) or call Dianna at 231-299-1205.

## AYP Staff Highlight: Jackie Kacynski

Ever wonder who plans the AYP programs? Jackie Kacynski joined the team at the Armory Youth Project in August 2020 as a gym assistant. Today, she is the program coordinator and is responsible for creating the programming schedule for the students as well as teaching. Jackie has been instrumental in expanding our programs such as Fishing 101 and First Kitchen 101 and continuing to offer programs that are popular events with students such as art, archery tag, and basketball. As part of her role, Jackie works with the volunteers who teach many of the AYP programs to ensure AYP is providing an engaging curriculum to the students. Jackie has a Bachelor’s degree in Physical Education (K-12) and Biology Education (grades 6-12) from Saginaw Valley State University. “I am thankful for the role that the Armory plays in our community and am excited to be a part of it,” stated Kacynski. “We design our programs around the Armory’s four pillars of educational, emotional, physical, and spiritual development to focus on the whole person,” she said. Feel free to contact Jackie with your ideas for additional programming; if you have a talent to offer or to support an existing program or camp, Jackie can be reached at 231-299-1205.



## Lauren Carlson: Community Partner/Volunteer

“Supporting youth programming at the AYP allows me to share my gifts and time with the community. As a creative writer, I enjoy sharing my passion with students. The AYP does a wonderful job of offering a safe, encouraging, and fun place for kids to explore many different activities.”

— Lauren Carlson, Poet



## Ben Ubert: Community Partner/Volunteer

“I believe in the AYP’s impact because of how it directly reaches the lives of the youth it serves by building the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of the students. I’m grateful to have the opportunity to support that mission.”

— Ben Ubert, Coast Guard Station Manistee



**Thomas Racine, Student**

*What is your favorite program at the Armory?*

**"I would say Art or Create & Craft. I get to express myself through art."**

*How long have you been coming to the Armory?*

**"Since the beginning of 6th grade."**

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

**"It's a really nice place here. You can really have a lot of fun. The instructors are really nice!"**

*What is your favorite thing about being at the Armory?*

**"I get to spend time with my friends."**

*Thomas Racine*

**AYP increases hours to serve youth in 2023**

The Armory Youth Project has expanded its hours of operation to serve more youth! We are open Monday – Friday from 2:45 pm – 5:30 pm and Saturday from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm during the school year.

Our summer hours will be Monday - Friday from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm and Saturday from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm.

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