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## YAC Members Sworn into Office

Members of the City's Youth Advisory Committee took to heart the message they received from municipal officials when the volunteer group was formed three years ago.

Elect your own officers, the teens were told. Work with Perris staff to create and implement programs aimed at getting middle and high-school kids involved in helping their City become a better place. Challenge yourself, bring about change, make a positive contribution while having fun.

The Perris City Council on August 30 approved the appointment of new officers and members for the upcoming year. City Clerk Nancy Salazar administered the oath of office.

Mayor Daryl Busch, in remarks to the audience in council chambers and residents watching on television, praised the spirit, maturity and results of the Youth Advisory Committee.

"They meet on a regular basis," Busch said. "They govern themselves, they run their own meeting and they select their own officers. Their involvement with the YAC gives them an insight into how government works."

Since inception, Youth Advisory Committee volunteers have donated hundreds of hours supporting community events.

Those include:

- Assisting at the Live Well Perris Health Fair, Senior Prom Dance, installing solar panels at a City residence and volunteering at the Ice Cream Social and Tree Lighting Ceremony and community clean-up projects.
- Conducting a series of seminars on topics relevant to teenagers such as how to avoid abusive relationships and the importance of not texting while driving.
- Creating new programs like the monthly open mic night which gives aspiring singers, musicians and poets the chance to show their stuff before an audience of their peers.
- Participating in this year's "Job Shadow Day," which provided a behind-the-scenes look at how public and private business employees go about their daily duties.
- Submitting a "Photovoice" project that captured through pictures their concerns about the community. The images captured crosswalks in need of restriping, sidewalks with broken concrete, fast-food restaurants dominating prime locations on major streets and parks with insufficient trash receptacles. The project won the 2016 Public Outreach Award from the Inland Empire Section of the American Planning Association.



Members of the City of Perris Youth Advisory Committee are all smiles moments after being sworn into office by City Clerk Nancy Salazar. From left to right the new YAC representatives are Jacqueline Reliford, Jorge Amezcua, Courtney Hamilton, Alexa Olivas, Dianne Ochoa, Brianna Espinoza, Chine Ehiemere, Jasmin Garcia, Leticia Vargas and Brittany Burch.

Sara Cortés de Pavón, a Perris staff member who serves as a liaison to the YAC, said that while the members may be teenagers, their impact reaches across all ages.

"It goes without saying that the YAC Liaisons are extremely proud of all our YAC representatives and members at large," she said. "Their hard work and dedication to the Perris community has made the YAC into a successful civic engagement program which has empowered them to inspire positive growth, sustainable change and created value in volunteerism. It is a privilege to see each member's personal growth and transformation over the course of their time with the YAC."

Alexa Olivas, a senior at Rancho Verde High School, was elected YAC president for the next year.

Other officers include Jacqueline Reliford, a junior at Rancho Verde High School, vice president; Leticia Vargas, a senior at Nuviev Bridge Early College High School, treasurer, and Brittany Burch, a junior at the California Military Institute, secretary. Brianna Espinoza, 9th grade Nuviev Bridge Early College High School and Jasmin Garcia, a freshman at Orange Vista High School were selected as YAC historians. Jorge Amezcua, a senior at Nuviev Bridge; Courtney Hamilton, a sophomore at Citrus Hill High School; Dianne Ochoa, a sophomore at Citrus Hill and Chine Ehiemere, a senior at Rancho Verde High School were chosen YAC representatives.

Members at large include Aaliyah Upson, a freshman at Orange Vista; Aasiyah DeAndrade, a senior at Rancho Verde; Abigail Medina, a senior at Citrus Hill; Angel Upson, an eighth-grader at Lakeside Middle School; Chantal Loreda, a senior at Rancho Verde; Danielle Segers, an eighth grader at Innovative Horizons Charter School; Ebere Amadi-Azuogu, a junior at CMI; Gabriela Salazar, a senior at Rancho Verde; Gabriella Bulacan, a senior at Paloma Valley; India Rockett, a senior at Rancho Verde; Iridiana Rayo, a freshman at CMI; Jenna Owens, a senior at Rancho Verde; Kenneth Hamilton, a junior at Citrus Hill; Litzy Rodriguez, an eighth-grader at Innovative Horizons; Megan Baker, a junior at Rancho Verde; Machaela Bulacan, a freshman at Paloma Valley; Montel Williams, a senior at Perris High School; Paige Edwards, a senior at Notre Dame High School; Samantha Valdez, an eighth-grader at Bell Mountain Middle School; Sorcha Luchembe, a sophomore at Perris High School; Taleyah Willit, a senior at Nuviev Bridge; Tanya Loreda, a senior at Perris High School; Thressa Guzman, a senior at Rancho Verde; Viviana Pavón-Cortés, a senior at Temescal Canyon High School and Yajaira Velazquez, a senior at Nuviev Bridge.

### Media Contact

Joe Vargo  
Public Information Officer  
951-943-6100  
[jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)



Perris City Hall  
101 N. D Street  
Perris, CA 92570

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6pm

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