***Payette County Youth Advisory Council***

1. **Background**

In 2013 the Cultivate Idaho Initiative was brought to Payette County by a group of citizens representing various sectors of the community. This was a 10-month community assessment that focused on finding sustainable solutions to building food security in our community. After several months of community assessments and interviews, an event called *Cultivate: A Place at the Table* was held at the Payette County Fairgrounds. This event brought together community members in order to teach them about the Cultivate Idaho Initiative as well as to spur discussion on food security issues in Payette County.

During the *Cultivate: A Place at the Table* event presenters spoke on three main focus areas: *Strengthening Local Food Systems*, *Regulations & the Food Modernization Act*, and *Building County-Wide Community & Communication*. During the following breakout workshops, citizens discussed key issues of their specific focus area. They then brainstormed new ideas to address and potentially reverse these issues. Out of the *Building County-Wide Community & Communication* group came the vision to develop better communication among the three Payette County towns, as well as a vision for youth development in the county. To reach these goals, community members agreed that one of the most pressing next steps would be to develop a county-wide youth council.

1. **Project Goals**

* Implement a County Youth Council to focus on food security issues in Payette County
* Develop stronger county-wide communication and cooperation
* Keep youth involved in their community in order to foster community pride and ownership
* Foster greater high-school & college graduation rates through leadership development
* Nurture youth-adult partnerships in our community

1. **Community Benefits:** 
   * More cooperation and conversation between towns
   * Gives youth a “voice” in their community and a platform to share their community concerns
   * Youth-adult relationships and developed leadership skills may help to lower high school drop-out rates
   * Youth develop a sense of community which will encourage them to remain in the community after graduation, in turn this may increase local business development

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