Vote for YMCA orchard volunteer Josh to reach awards final

Wednesday 23 August, 2017

YMCA Humber is asking local people to vote for one of its inspiring young volunteers ahead of a prestigious national youth awards ceremony hosted this autumn by business woman, Sky presenter and BBC's The Apprentice winner, Michelle Dewberry.

The local youth charity, which has operated in North East Lincolnshire for the past 135 years has nominated volunteer, Josh Dean as Young Volunteer of the Year in Youth Matters Awards 2017.

Youth Matters is YMCA's national awards programme that has been an integral part of the charity's calendar since 2009.

Josh is up against other young volunteers from across the country within his/her award category. Other award categories are YMCA of the Year, Young Achiever of the Year, Young Worker of the Year and Young Leader of the Year.

Josh has been entered for the award because of his inspirational volunteering on the charity's orchard project in Grimsby.

Voting starts online at midnight on Monday 14 August and runs until midnight on Friday 25 August. Votes cast by the public will be combined with judges' choices and the three finalists will be announced on 29 August. All the finalists will attend the ceremony at the exclusive venue 8 Northumberland Avenue, in central London, where the winner will be announced.

Josh said: "I am really excited to be nominated for such a significant award and to have reached this stage of the process.

"My life has changed so much since getting involved with YMCA and I hope everyone will support me and vote. To make it through to the final judging panel would be incredible."

Sharon Marray is YMCA Humber's Finance Manager and also leads on the orchard project, she said:

"Josh joined us as a resident of our YMCA Foyer project in January 2016 and is currently studying at The Grimsby Institute.

"After a successful grant bid, YMCA Humber began their orchard project and from the start Josh showed a high level of interest.

"It is through this interest that prompted Josh to serve as a member of the youth panel for learning through landscapes.

"This experience gave Josh the opportunity to meet other volunteers from participating YMCAs and have a voice on the national orchard project.

"Through his efforts Josh devised and pitched his idea of a digital water irrigation system powered from solar panels and rainfall to the O2 think big panel in London.

"The panel loved his idea and was awarded £8,300 in funding.

"Josh is now the project lead for digital water irrigation system which involves implementing a timeline, negotiating for the equipment and working on a corresponding volunteer plan to accompany the project.

"Josh's volunteer efforts have played a large role in the success of the orchard project and we look forward to his continued dedication even after he leaves YMCA Foyer."

Youth Matters celebrates the outstanding skills and achievements of young people from across the country. It also recognises the vital work that YMCAs deliver every day to help transform the lives of young people and give them a brighter future.

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The Young Volunteer of the Year Award recognises a dedicated young volunteer (aged under 30-years-old) who has shown outstanding commitment to YMCA and contributed energy, skills and time.

Vote in Youth Matters at www.ymca.org.uk/awards. Follow YMCA Humber on Twitter and join the conversation using #YMA17.

For more information on Youth Matters, visit www.ymca.org.uk/awards. For more information on YMCA Humber, visit www.ymca-humber.com

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