Lexi Laginess
Michigan HOBY & Bedford Community Foundation



Everything that Lexi Laginess does has to do with serving others—whether it be student government and national honors society at school or her work with [Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership](http://www.hoby.org/) (HOBY) Michigan or the [Bedford Community Foundation](http://www.bedfordcommunityfoundation.com/). A senior at Bedford Senior High School in Temperance, Michigan, Laginess has been involved in the Bedford Community Foundation’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC) since her sophomore year, which asks of its members not just grantmaking work, but also community service.

Through these service projects, Laginess said, the YAC members ask themselves: “How can we reach out and help the youth in our Bedford community?’” The YAC, comprising a few dozen members, will then vote on grant applicants based around that experience and the nonprofit’s application.

Her philanthropic work has inspired her to make a career of giving. She was recognized for her amazing work this year with a  restigious [Youth Jefferson Award](http://www.toledoblade.com/Education/2015/11/26/Bedford-students-recognized-for-community-work.html) (pictured right). Laginess plans to pursue a degree in nonprofit management in college. “I hope that the nonprofit I end up working for does something with philanthropy and youth empowerment with leadership,” she said.

This plan for her future, Laginess said, clicked during her sophomore year at the beginning of her engagement with both HOBY and the Bedford Community Foundation. “I spend countless hours doing things for any of the organizations that I’m involved in,” she said. “And it’s not even like a chore, really. It’s more of like: I love what I’m doing….So how can I keep doing it?”

This is Laginess’ first year on Youth Philanthropy Connect’s Leadership Team, and she said the experience has given her a different sense of independence, compared to her work helping prepare gatherings with HOBY. “It’s given me more power and more say in what we’re going to do to empower youth that are coming to our conference.”

Laginess expressed excitement to see a gathering of the size of[YPC’s 2016 International Conference](http://www.fcfox.org/ypc2016register/)from the perspective of someone on the planning committee. “It’s always different when you’re staff cause then you’re obviously still a participant, but then you’re also like, ‘Oh, I knew those people were coming! They’re going to be so cool!’” Laginess said.

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