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**Meet Sandy Marquez**  
*our newest addition to the staff of Empower Youth.*

*Sandy Marquez is bringing her enthusiasm for education and preparing children for the future to her position as Empower Youth's Education Director.*

*Sandy has been educating young people for twenty-eight years. After developing and delivering a leadership curriculum to Bethel Tate's Middle schoolers 2017-2018, she wrote and received The State Farm Neighborhood Assist Grant for Empower Youth's leadership program. Sandy holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from The Ohio State University. While Sandy was a classroom teacher in the Columbus Public School System she also worked as an independent contractor writing curriculum for The Mailbox Magazine, a teacher resource publication. Although she stepped away from classroom teaching she continued honing her teaching craft through the homeschooling of her four children.*

*Our entire pilot program including Sandy's salary is coming from the State Farm Neighborhood Assist Grant.*

## We did it! State Farm Gives EY \$25,000!

Empower Youth has always been a community effort to aggressively fight poverty and raise up leaders in our rural communities.

This past Summer we applied for the State Farm Neighborhood Assist Grant. We applied specifically to use this grant to fund our in school leadership classes. Our ultimate goal of every school we serve is to be able to teach within the school vital leadership skills through small group classes. In today's school where there is pressure on every front, to be invited into a school represents a trust between the school administration and Empower Youth. We do not take the bonds we form with our school superintendents lightly. We also work hard to give every teacher in the system information to take our lessons beyond the small group setting of our volunteer led student groups.

Our goal is simple: form relationships with students that will follow them through their graduation of high school or trade school. We believe that success for any student is one relationship away. We want to be that relationship in the gap. Our leadership classes dovetail beautifully into our Summer internship program. This past Summer we worked with 22 students through Easter Seals. Our goal the same as our classes become that one life-giving uplifting mentor relationship that becomes the game-changer for students in need.

The \$25,000 grant from State Farm is allowing us to hire an education director to write our curriculum and oversee the program as well as pay for the supplies needed to run the education classes. The money from the grant is designated specific to our education program and will not be used for anything other than reaching the students in this manner. We are in exciting times to be able to meet this need in our community.

The pilot program will be in Bethel OH this summer and include offerings for the Middle School, High School, and Primary School.

Did you know that your volunteer hours count for real money? Check this out and name Empower Youth—

<https://www.statefarm.com/retirees/good-neighbor-grant>



**Receiving the State Farm Grant : Scott and Lori Conley, Sandy Marquez, Letitia Fulkerson , and Alison Taylor**



## New schools to be added.

As Empower Youth makes more of an impact in our home base school and more money is received to take care of our camp scholarships and leadership programs, we can now allocate even more funds to feeding children and broadening our scope. Our current food budget is \$80,000. We meet this budget regardless of salary to our director or the funding of any other program. We are particularly interested in schools that currently do not have a weekend food bag program. The typical way that we start in a school is through the recommendation of a teacher or parent who sees a need. We would like to expand into more Appalachian and rural poverty schools so if you think you have school that would fit our program, please contact our Executive Director Lori Conley via email at [toempoweryouth@gmail.com](mailto:toempoweryouth@gmail.com). Our base criteria is to have a volunteer at the school who will be our contact as well as coordinate the delivery of the bags. Each school is responsible for their own driver.

## Christmas Wonderland

Taking the most wonderful Christmas scene from your favorite Christmas movie, we are transforming Woodland Lakes Camp into a winter wonderland for all of our students on December 15. At this event, every student will receive a gift. Every family will receive an incredible amount of fun Christmas food. Every person in attendance will enjoy a winter carnival including a live nativity. Even Santa and Mrs. Clause will be there! This will be huge. We will start taking applications for this event immediately. But we need volunteers to help us! The event is December 15 with 3 sessions: 9:30-11:30am, 1-3pm, and 3:30-5:30pm. If you are interested in sponsoring a craft table or helping with decorating or just showing up for a session to help in anyway please contact our Christmas coordinator Scott Wedemeyer at [SWedemeyer@amig.com](mailto:SWedemeyer@amig.com).

If you are reading this and are one of our Empower Youth students who would like to attend with your family, please contact your school secretary to get a form or Lori at [toempoweryouth@gmail.com](mailto:toempoweryouth@gmail.com) to have a form sent to you.

### How do we meet our growing budget?

Companies, churches, civic groups, and individuals make donations monthly to keep the ravioli rolling and the smiles on more than 700 faces weekly.

Please consider having our Executive Directors or a member of our board speak to your group. We can only go as far as our funds will take us.

There are many special projects on the ranch we would like to complete including a home for our managers Scott and Lori. The estimated cost of this project without labor donated would be close to \$60,000 to build a simple pole barn home with a dining quarters to feed 30 folks.

Want to help us build relationships that change faces of poverty and neglect into hope and promise? Help us build a place where relationships can be built that changes personal narratives for the better.

**Everyday food donations we can always use: Peanutbutter and cheese cracker packs, oatmeal packs, cans of ravioli, and juice pouches.**



Good leaders give their power away! They look for good people and they invest in them to the point where they can be released and empowered to perform.

JOHN MAXWELL



*There are so many ways to lead but at Empower Youth... we don't just empower those we serve, we empower those who serve.*

*This model has made us one of the fastest growing volunteer-based organization in our area. In the last year we have seen more than 1200 volunteers on our campus. Some our weekly and others are one-time workers but the impact they make is immeasurable.*

*Join our team! We need you. We have room for weekly workers as well as special project folks such as our Christmas Wonderland event.*

*We need teams and individuals to pack our weekend food bags. We could use folks who love to lead to lead our work teams. There are jobs all over the ranch that need handymen and women.*

*Join us today!*

*Email: [volunteer.empoweryouth@gmail.com](mailto:volunteer.empoweryouth@gmail.com)*

*Our volunteer coordinator Pam is not just a coordinator but also a valuable volunteer herself. She will find a place for you. There is no age limit high or low!*



**Christmas Quarter Auction**

**Thursday, November 8 6:30pm**

Doors open at 6pm.

Woodland Lakes Christian Camp, 3097 Lindale Mt Holly Road, Amelia OH

Toys, Housewares, Home Décor, Garden, Gift Cards, Admission Tickets and More!

Email Betty at [bettyhowell@hotmail.com](mailto:bettyhowell@hotmail.com) to donate items or for more info.