

# Members of 'go LEAD'

Thirteen local teens spent a week of their summer learning how they can be leaders in their community, chose a volunteer project and took action.

The group is the United Way's first ever "go LEAD" (generation on leadership, education and development) project, a service learning and leadership camp.



"Go Lead" volunteers are Mykel Alexander, Angel Betancourt, Jimmy Garcia, Brenda Gonzalez, Damary Gutierrez Hernandez, Wyatt Huggins, Adolfo Angel Hurtado, D'Andre Massey, Jordan Moore, Maria Paez, Nancy Paez, Madison Roland and Rowdy Zeisig.

The camp is designed to teach teens leadership.

Amy Faillace, United Way volunteer center coordinator, said the group members learn what leaders are, how they can be a leader and team-building skills.

"They combine what they have already learned with what they are learning now and use that to help in the

community," said Faillace.

Each member chose a problem in the community that they wanted to help change.

The group narrowed the list down to four and visited various agencies in the community that provide resources for solving those problems.

They then chose the problem that had the least amount of resources available and got to work on it: furthering education beyond high school.

"Not all teens further their (education) to college, so we decided we would take charge and find resources and help them with that," said Madison Roland, 15, a member of the go LEAD project.

The group partnered with the teen center of the Boys and Girls Club in Whitfield County. Each member was paired off into a peer partnership. Members from go LEAD talked with their partners and then researched the career their partner is interested in.

The group presented their research to their partners and supplied them with various resources for enrolling in college and financial planning.

Faillace said the members of the group took initiative and sought out the opportunity to volunteer this summer.

Roland volunteers throughout the school year with the Beta Club and Honor Society.

She said when summer comes and she can't volunteer through her school groups she visits the United Way's website to find other volunteer opportunities.

"It's good to volunteer in our community to help better it," said Roland.

Mykel Alexander, 17, a member of go LEAD, said, "I thought it would be a great opportunity and great experience to branch out and help the community."

For their desire to help the community through volunteering, The Daily Citizen names the members of the go LEAD project Citizens of the Week.