

FEMA Region 8 Recognizes Colorado Students selected to National Youth Preparedness Council

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DENVER – FEMA’s [Youth Preparedness Council](#) has announced its membership for the 2022-2023 school year. The council includes youth from across the country who are interested in supporting disaster preparedness and making a difference in their communities. Students complete disaster preparedness projects nationally and locally. FEMA Region 8, which includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming, currently has two representatives. They are [Lauren Coval](#) and [Isaac Doll](#), both from Colorado.

A highlight for members is the FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Summit, which takes place in July, kicking off the year. The 2022 virtual summit included visits from the Second Gentlemen Doug Emhoff, former FEMA Deputy Administrator Richard Serino, and current FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. The council members also participated in panel discussions related to equity and climate change.

“FEMA Region 8 congratulates Lauren and Isaac for selection to the National Youth Preparedness Council,” said Regional Administrator Nancy Dragani. “Young people like them are the future of emergency management. They have a unique opportunity to help make our nation more prepared, and they are starting at the grassroots level.”

Lauren was inspired to join the council after seeing the devastation in several wildfires in Colorado, such as the Waldo Canyon Fire in 2012 and the Black Forest Fire in 2013. “After that, I really wanted to help my community. Seeing all the suffering and loss, I just wanted to help people.”

Lauren started her school’s first Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and even hosted a Wildfire Preparedness Day in her community with local law enforcement and firefighters. She aspires to encourage more formal



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emergency preparedness disaster curricula in schools. “I saw so many people moving to Colorado that it inspired me to educate others on our crazy weather and environment,” she said. “One of my biggest passions is education.”

Isaac, who is in his second year with the council, was encouraged to apply for the council because of his passion for psychology. As a now experienced member, he hopes to explore how to prepare people for the psychological effects of disasters. Isaac is also an AmeriCorps member, a U.S. Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps member, and a psychology student at Montana State University. During his first year with the council, Isaac and his team created a website featuring preparedness information for young people -- www.youthprep4all.org.

“We really wanted to focus on underserved communities and people with disabilities,” Isaac said. “Coming from different backgrounds on the council, we worked together on that.”

Lauren and Isaac will join fellow members from across the country to complete new projects related to preparedness. They also serve as ambassadors for other young people to get involved with preparedness in their own communities.

“Young people have a lot of great ideas,” said Isaac. “They could start a Teen CERT, or just sit down with their neighbors. You just need to start talking.”

“I’m excited for what my team is going to be doing this year for our project,” said Lauren. “I’m in the community engagement group and our focus is equity and inclusion.”

If you or a young person you know are interested in following in Lauren and Isaac’s footsteps, learn more at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/individuals-communities/youth-preparedness-council>.

