COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

NEWS RELEASE

Date: October 25, 2024
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FIRST YOUTH ADVISORY TASK FORCE CONVENED

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce membership of the inaugural Youth Advisory Task Force, bringing together 23 area youth who live, work or go to school in the county.

The Youth Advisory Task Force held its first meeting Monday and will explore issues facing local youth and make findings and recommendations related to youth engagement in local government. The Task Force is the result of the "A Santa Cruz County Like Me" initiative, which aims to diversify the age, class, racial/ethnic, gender, geographic representation, educational attainment, and other demographic profiles of the approximately 35 County commissions and committees to better reflect the community.

In all, the County received 75 applications for the Youth Advisory Task Force, far exceeding expectations and demonstrating that local youth seek to be more engaged in important issues facing their community. Task Force members range in age from 14 to 24 and were selected from neighborhoods and schools throughout the county. The Youth Advisory Task Force will meet monthly through October 2025.

The task force members are:

Aedan Wall, Corralitos	Jade Soto, Capitola
Ana Torres, Freedom	Juliana Heritage, Santa Cruz
Andrea Ornelas-Perez, Watsonville	Juliet Ray, Live Oak
Audrey Martinez, Watsonville	Layla Pasquini, Santa Cruz
Benjamin Williams, Santa Cruz	Lucas Brown, Live Oak
Carlos Daniel Carrillo, Live Oak	Mark Mendoza Luengas , Watsonville
Daniel Fernandez , Watsonville	Maximiliano Barraza Hernández, Watsonville
Dustin Lopez, Scotts Valley	
Dylan Turzak , Scotts Valley	Melanie Camacho-Estevez, Prunedale
Elsy Fabian , Live Oak	Najia Fayez, Santa Cruz
Gabriel Melesio Romero, Santa Cruz	Natalie Allen, Aptos
Jack Smith, Aptos	Toryn Thompson, Felton