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**Creating a more just and inclusive society.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Local youth featured in national social justice campaign as 10th Annual EmpowerMT High School Leadership Camp gets underway.**

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**Missoula, MT** - EmpowerMT is gathering for its 10th annual High School Leadership Camp on July 28th in Seeley Lake as one of its graduating leaders is featured the Funding Collaborative for Youth Organizing's national campaign telling the story of youth led social justice organizing.

Jessica Beers first attended EmpowerMT's High School Advanced leadership training 4 years ago. Since that time she has led trainings to hundreds of her peers across Montana to help end bullying in schools. She has also fought for LGBTQ rights and worked to get local leaders to make our community more accessible to people with diverse abilities.

Jessica graduated from Big Sky High School this past June and will be attending the University of Montana in the fall. Now she is featured in a national campaign by the Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing that is telling the story of youth led social justice organizing across the United States. (Story found here: <https://fcyo.atavist.com/jessica>)

Founded in 2000, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) is a dynamic collective of social justice funders and youth organizing practitioners dedicated to advancing youth organizing as a strategy for youth development and social change. FCYO's mission is to increase resources to the field of youth organizing and promote the leadership of low-income young people and young people of color in social justice organizing.

Each summer EmpowerMT's High School Leadership Camp trains up to 60 high school students like Jessica in their violence and bullying prevention leadership curriculum during a 3-day summer camp. These students go on to impact as many as 3000 of their peers in schools across Montana each year. This year's camp will be held July 28 -30 at Camp Paxson on Seeley Lake and will include high school students and educators from all four Missoula High Schools, Seeley Lake, Ronan, Pablo and Frenchtown.

EmpowerMT creates a more just and inclusive society by developing youth and adult leaders who work to end mistreatment, correct systemic inequalities and strengthen communities across Montana. EmpowerMT envisions a Montana where each person is respected, where differences are understood, where youth, institutions, and communities share a commitment to correct injustices, and where all people have the opportunity to thrive without the risk of violence or oppression.