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Creating a more just and inclusive society.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[EMPOWER MONTANA'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE EXCELS NATIONALLY]

(MISSOULA, MT December 10th, 2019) Empower Montana was identified as a high impact youth development program by youth development research and data collection institute, Hello Insight, for the 2018-19 school year. Empower Montana was placed in the top seventeen high impact youth development organizations out of 459 programs surveyed and was the only organization recognized in the Northwest. This impact award recognizes Empower Montana for using positive youth development practices to support young people in developing significantly more Social Emotional Learning capacities than their peers. Empower Montana is a non-profit organization working with youth and adults to promote equity, and inclusivity across the state of Montana. Empower Montana has a 20 year history of working to create 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.

Empower Montana was recognized for the social emotional learning growth provided by our annual summer Empowering Youth Leadership Institute that provides leadership development and violence prevention skill-building to middle school and high school students, and provides a foundation for these youth to become volunteers and co-leaders of Empower Montana programming. The Social Emotional Learning growth provided by the Youth Leadership Institute is essential to youth development. Social Emotional Learning qualities rival academic or technical skills in their ability to predict employment and earnings, among other outcomes. Social Emotional Learning measures growth in positive identity, social skills, self-management, social capital, academic self-efficacy, and a sense of contribution. Growth in these areas are seen as critical in the face of current societal, economic, environmental, and social challenges impacting our world today.

Over the past 12 years Empower Montana has been providing our Empowering Youth Leadership Institute, they've trained over 600 youth that have gone on to co-lead youth and school based anti-bullying and violence prevention trainings to nearly 32,000 youth and educators across the state of Montana. During the 2019 Empowering Youth Leadership Institute, Empower Montana trained 43 youth and 19 educators that included 25 participants from rural and tribal communities. 42% of participating youth identified as LGBTQ+ and 40% of participants identify as people of color. Of these participants, 100% of students participating in one of our Youth Leadership camps showed gains in at least 1 Social Emotional Learning outcome with 90% showing growth in three or more outcomes. Most significantly, 88% of participants reported growth in Academic Self-Efficacy, meaning that after completing the Leadership Institute, youth felt more comfortable advocating for themselves in academics and more capable in managing academic responsibilities.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please call Kelsie Severson at (406)-541-6891 or email kelsie@empowermt.org