

Exeter Proud Wyoming Area Senior Scholarship



In March of 2014, Exeter Borough Council appointed a small team of concerned residents to research methods of revitalizing the Wyoming Avenue corridor of town and, more importantly, to spark an improved sense of community within the borough.

Mission Statement: *Exeter Proud will strive to foster participation and pride in our town by promoting a sustainable and progressive plan that provides residents and businesses with a safe, healthy and productive environment.*

The group selected the name Exeter Proud and began to take measures to attain nonprofit 501(c)3 status which they succeeded in doing. At that same time, it came to the group's attention that the Exeter VFW was struggling to finance the Memorial Day parade which they sponsor with the West Pittston veterans' group each year. Exeter Proud accepted the challenge of raising funds for the group by designing, printing, distributing and promoting the "We Support Our Veterans" yard signs and banners. The sale was enthusiastically supported by the community and because of its success, Exeter Proud was able to present the veterans with a check for more than \$1,000. In conjunction with the fundraiser, Exeter Proud also initiated an essay contest for Wyoming Area middle-school students on behalf of the Exeter VFW group awarding a cash prize to the student who submitted the most significant essay about what veterans mean to them.

After meeting with a number of representatives from various government agencies, Exeter Proud was successful in securing a \$13,000 grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development in 2017 for which Exeter Borough Council provided matching funds. The Exeter Proud Board of Directors resolved to tackle the update of the Exeter Borough Comprehensive Plan which was long overdue having not been upgraded since the late 1960's. Extensive research and planning were undertaken during the summer of 2018 to renew this large handbook laying the groundwork for the future development of Exeter Borough's infrastructure, sustainability, residents' health, zoning —just to name a few issues. Exeter Borough Council ratified the 2019 Comprehensive Plan on January 8, 2019.

The importance of community relationships cannot be overstated as evidenced by this impressive scholarship program. Each day of our lives we draw another thread across the fabric binding us to all those we interact with throughout our day. Our communities are our safety nets in life, yet, not without certain obligations. Their resilience is dependent on our participation and willingness to give back that which we have drawn from the reservoir so that others can benefit as we have. These bonds are difficult to break away from and next to impossible to leave behind. 2019 is the inaugural year for this award to the Wyoming Area graduating senior residing in Exeter who is ranked highest in the senior class (based on rankings for Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 when these are available in early May).

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant."

~ Robert Louis Stevenson