

Hello! First off I want to thank you for this opportunity! It is an honor and a privilege to be here and I am so grateful for this opportunity. My name is Jaxon and I use They/Them pronouns. I am from Hartland VT, I am 15, and I am a freshman at Hartford High School!

I applied for the Vermont State Youth Advisory Council so that I could help more youth in Vermont feel like they belong. I want to make more places where kids can go and meet other kids like them! I think having more places like this will help with the mental health of kids in Vermont. They will have a place to go where they can be truly them, they will meet people who they can connect to and trust. Through programs like this they will meet adults they trust and can talk to. By having this it will help with the mental health of youth in Vermont.

I was ten when I was diagnosed with Chronic Recurrent Multifocal Osteomyelitis (CRMO). It is a condition where my immune system attacks my bones and destroys them. It's a one in a million condition. Sometimes I feel like people don't get what I am going through, and when that happens I think about Double H Ranch. Double H Ranch was founded by Paul Newman, it's a camp for kids with serious illnesses. It's my happy place! When I am at camp I get to meet kids who are going through a lot of the same stuff I am. I get to connect with people like me and I get to see that I am not alone. I applied for the Vermont State Youth Advisory Council to help Youth in Vermont not feel alone. To let them know there are people out there like them.

To give them those resources to meet new people, talk to people like them, and not feel alone.

Thank you for your time today. It was an honor to tell my story. I am one of the luckiest kids alive and I want to make it so that every kid is as lucky as me. Thank you!