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Riviera Beach Named 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award Winner

Youth Council recognized by Florida League of Cities for community initiative

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TALLAHASSEE, FL – The **Florida League of Cities (FLC)**, the united voice for Florida’s municipal governments, announced the **Riviera Beach Youth Council** as one of three winners of the 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award. The annual competition recognizes exceptional youth council initiatives or projects that have made significant contributions to their local municipalities.

Municipal youth councils are special councils that typically serve as advisory boards to the local governments. They are composed of high school students within the city and are sometimes referred to as youth corps, teen advisory boards, or mayor’s youth councils.

The Riviera Beach Youth Council earned the 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award for its Anti-Vape Campaign, a community awareness initiative created to protect youth by educating them on the health dangers of vaping and the serious legal consequences associated with THC-related products. Recognizing that vaping has become increasingly normalized among middle and high school students, the Youth Council partnered with the City of Riviera Beach Chief of Police, the Palm Beach County School District, and the Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition to deliver a multi-layered campaign that included informational posters distributed to local schools, a Youth Town Hall, recorded public service announcements, and a social media awareness initiative using youth-friendly graphics and short videos.

The campaign gained regional attention when a Youth Council member was featured in a Channel 12 News special segment on teen vaping, amplifying the Council's message that young people can identify challenges in their community and lead meaningful solutions.

"The Riviera Beach Youth Council has demonstrated incredible leadership by tackling a pressing health issue for young people today," said **FLC President Holly D. Smith, Vice Mayor of Sanibel**. "Through strategic partnerships, peer-to-peer outreach, and powerful public engagement, these young leaders are changing the narrative around vaping and empowering their peers to make informed, healthier choices. I am incredibly proud of the Riviera Beach Youth Council for showing that when youth speak up, communities listen. With young leaders like these championing meaningful initiatives in their communities, the future of Florida’s cities is bright."

The Pembroke Pines Youth Advisory Board and the West Park Youth Council were also named winners in the statewide competition. Contest winners will receive a monetary award of \$500, a trophy, and be featured online in the League's Quality Cities (QC) magazine as well as on the League's website and social media outlets.

For more information on the winning projects, visit flcities.com/youth-councils.

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Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida's cities, which are formed and governed by their citizens. The League believes in "Local Voices Making Local Choices," which focuses on the impact citizens and city leaders have in improving Florida's communities. For more information, visit flcities.com.