



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 21, 2016

**Contact:** Bobby Persinger

**E-mail:** [bpersinger@pathwaysco.org](mailto:bpersinger@pathwaysco.org)

**Phone:** 740.345.6166 ext. 228

## **Pathways of Central Ohio Receives Contribution from AT&T for Youth Leadership Program**

*Funding to help provide leadership development opportunities to area teens*

NEWARK, Ohio, Nov. 21, 2016— [AT&T](#)\* has made a \$10,000 contribution to Pathways of Central Ohio in support of the organization's Youth Leadership Council of Licking County program. The contribution will be presented at a news conference today.

The Youth Leadership Council of Licking County (YLC) is a youth-led prevention project comprised of high school students who collaboratively work to help make Licking County a happy, healthy, safe and drug free place to live, work and go to school. The YLC program is the largest youth-led prevention and leadership program in Licking County dedicated to educating youth about the dangers of substance use, physical and mental abuse, bullying and violence.

"Helping our youth grow up in a mentally and physically healthier environment with less substance abuse and increased safety is critical," said State Representative Scott Ryan. "I am encouraged by the collaboration exhibited by AT&T and Pathways of Central Ohio."

The YLC Program removes non-academic barriers and establishes relationships with teens creating a culture of support. Students are provided guidance and the confidence to make good healthy choices, discover their potential and are provided with essential tools to complete their high school education and pursue post-secondary education to attain their future dreams. Since 2013, YLC has surveyed participants with an overall success rate at 92% annually.

"Pathways is committed to ensuring that students receive the support they need while empowering them to make healthy life choices," said Bobby Persinger, director of the Center for Prevention Services at Pathways of Central Ohio. "We rely on support from organizations like AT&T to continue these necessary programs."

"Pathways of Central Ohio has been continuously committed to providing mentoring and civic engagement to our youth," said BJ Smith, director of external affairs at AT&T. "That's why AT&T is pleased to collaborate with Pathways of Central Ohio to ensure that our youth have safe spaces to learn and further develop their leadership skills."

AT&T's contribution is made possible through its signature philanthropic initiative, AT&T Aspire. AT&T Aspire is driving innovation in education to promote student success in school and beyond. AT&T is leveraging technology, relationships and social innovation to help all students make their biggest dreams a reality.

## **About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T**

AT&T Inc. is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T's signature philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring. Through Aspire, we've passed the \$250 million mark on our plan to invest \$350 million in education from 2008-2017.

## **Youth Leadership Council of Licking County**

The Youth Leadership Council of Licking County is an award-winning youth prevention and leadership development project comprised of high school students who collaboratively work to help make Licking County a happy, healthy, safe and drug free place to live, work and go to school. Through prevention education, civic engagement, leadership development and community service, the YLC strives to educate and inform parents, professionals and their peers on the dangers of substance use, abuse and violence. The YLC is a prevention project of Pathways of Central Ohio with support from Our Futures in Licking County. To learn more, visit [www.kidscaretoo.org](http://www.kidscaretoo.org)

## **Pathways of Central Ohio**

Pathways of Central Ohio is a private, non-profit social service agency serving Licking, Knox, Richland, Muskingum, Perry, Morgan Counties. Pathways was established in 1968 and incorporated in 1970. Pathways is the gateway to services which empower the community to achieve success. Pathways is funded in part by Ohio Mental Health & Addiction Services, Mental Health & Recovery for Licking and Knox Counties and the United Way of Licking County. For more, visit [www.pathwaysofcentralohio.org](http://www.pathwaysofcentralohio.org).



###