

# Youth taking action to give themselves a voice in SLT

By Karen Houser

Youth in South Lake Tahoe have set the wheels in motion and are taking the next steps to form a South Lake Tahoe Youth Commission. In 2009, high school and community college students began meeting and looking into what it would take to form a Youth Commission. The purpose of the commission is for the youth to have a "voice" in the future of our community.

Following the model established by the El Dorado County Youth Commission, the planning team has been meeting regularly to develop action plans and identify the needs of the youth in the community. Once established, like their county peers who work directly with the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and local Supervisor Norma Santiago, the South Lake Tahoe Youth Commission will work with the South Lake Tahoe City Council.



Tiffany Racz,  
(L-R) Hannah  
Wheelen,  
Alicia  
Estrada,  
Daniel Reyes  
and Keith  
Dennis Taylor

are part of  
the SLT Youth  
Commission.  
Photo/Provided

The El Dorado County Youth Commission evolved from efforts of a group of young people who wanted to make a difference, just like the group now working in South Lake Tahoe.

The planning team recently wrote, presented and was awarded an EDGABY grant. The El Dorado Grant Advisory Board for Youth (EDGABY) is a program of the El Dorado Community Foundation and the El Dorado County 4-H Youth Development Program. EDGABY is made possible through funding from the El Dorado Community Foundation. The \$2,000 award will be used to host a Youth Summit later in the summer.

Youth commissions are operating successfully in many communities across the state and give young people the opportunity to serve in an advisory capacity to their city or county government, bring young people into the government policy making process and provide them with opportunities to develop leadership skills in the political arena.

For information on how to become involved with the planning process of creating a Youth Commission for South Lake Tahoe, contact Karen or Shannon at the Boys & Girls Club (530) 542.0838 or [click here](#). For more information about the El Dorado County Youth Commission and EDGABY [click here](#).

*Karen Houser is executive director of the Lake Tahoe Boys & Girls Club.*