



# NEWSLETTER

## September 2016

Students & families welcome back to a new school year! We hope you all have had a fun and relaxing summer. We at The ROCK are so excited about the 2016-2017 school year. We are looking forward to meeting all of you. If you are returning to The ROCK or if you are brand new we want you to have all of the information to make this school year **ROCK!!**

**Our Mission:** To build hope and resilience in youth based on a foundation of acceptance, support, and respect that results in positive life choices.  
**Our Vision:** That all youth have the opportunity to live their potential.

### WELCOME BACK!

A Typical Day at our Afterschool Programs:  
Arrival/check-in  
SNACK  
High Energy Game  
HOMEWORK HELP  
Arts & Crafts Opportunities  
And a whole bunch more!  
Students get picked up or they walk home

Please feel free to stop by any of our locations and talk with the staff. We look forward to this awesome partnership. Remember if there is anything we at The ROCK can help your family with during this school year come talk with us.

#### A helpful hint from Lacey...

Utilize the homework help email. Since our students are in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade we will not be checking backpacks. If you know your student needs to get homework done please let us know by sending our tutors a quick email. Inform teachers that your student is in our program and give them the email.  
(See the bottom of the back side of this newsletter for more info)

Tutors:  
The Underground (GMCC) **Dan**  
Jefferson: **Nick**  
Northeast: **Alicia**

## ROCK GROUNDED

A quality after-school program for middle and high school students.

'Grounded', as defined by the always insightful Urban Dictionary, means being cut off from the world by parents. In the life of a teen, it means the ruining of one's social life. Here at The ROCK however, Grounded has the opposite meaning. We define 'Grounded' as our after-school program. Our after-school programming has been essential to our organization since its founding in 2001. We want students to feel at home at The ROCK, surrounded by people who they can talk to about anything and everything. We strive to create an environment in which we provide balance in the otherwise hectic life of a teenager. As time passed and the program grew we moved to Jefferson and Northeast Middle Schools as well as The Greater Midland Community Center where we are even more present in the community, schools, and the families of our teens. During the time your pre-teen or teen spends with us after-school they will have a safe space to hang out with friends, adult mentors who want the very best for them, snacks, homework help, activities and games, the chance to learn new things from community members and make new friends.

Perks of being part of The Grounded Program:

- ⇒ Your pre-teen or teen will not be home alone while you are at work.
- ⇒ Tutors will be there waiting to help your student with any homework needs.
- ⇒ Homework can be done before they get home, allowing for more quality family time.
- ⇒ Students can stop and take advantage of the program as they see fit. For instance, many students choose to relax, have a snack, and get some help with homework before their after school sport or club begins. Others use the program on a once-in-a-while basis, when other plans fall through. Most make us a part of their daily routine, attending the program after school whenever they can.

## LOCATIONS AND TIMES

Our Grounded Program meets at three different locations.

All three of our locations operate as a drop-in program. Teens are invited to come, get a snack, work on homework, socialize, and participate in our planned activities.

**Jefferson Middle School:** Open every full day of school. \* Meet in the cafeteria from 2:40-5:30PM or take the bus to The ROCK Underground.

**Northeast Middle School:** Open every full day of school. \* Meet in the library at 2:40 or take the bus to The ROCK Underground.

**Bullock Creek:** Transportation is provided by The ROCK, one way, from the school to The ROCK Underground at GMCC every full day of school.

**The ROCK Underground:** Meet at The Greater Midland Community Center from 2:30-6:00PM. Underground is open every week day, including snow days and half days, except for holidays and breaks. Daily activities will vary at this location.

\*If there's a dance at Northeast or Jefferson, we are closed. Our staff will join your teen at the dance.



### STAFF CONNECTIONS

These are the individuals you will want to know. Please tear off and save this section.

Team leads will have their phones on them at all times during the program and will be checking emails frequently. ROCK staff are here to provide a link to your teen while in this program. Feel free to contact them with any questions or concerns, or just to let them know you are on your way.



**LACEY WRIGHT**  
GROUNDED & UNPLUGGED PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
Crazy Lacey loves hanging out with kids of all ages. She loves teaching new games, getting everyone involved and building relationships.  
989.835.2542  
lacey@therock4yd.org



**CHASE BRENSKE**  
TEAM LEAD AT JEFFERSON  
Chase started out at The ROCK as a student in 2006 and has been with us ever since. "I like the fact that I can influence the students futures by giving them a positive outlook and keeping them out of trouble."  
989.259.5841  
chase@therock4yd.org



**AARON GONZALEZ**  
TEAM LEAD AT THE ROCK UNDERGROUND  
Aaron joined The ROCK in 2015. "I know what it was like to grow up here with nothing to do. The ROCK gives kids a place to experience positivity while having fun."  
989.835.2542  
aaron@therock4yd.org



**AARON HERNANDEZ**  
TEAM LEAD AT NORTHEAST  
Aaron joined The ROCK this year. "I think every student can benefit greatly from having positive and encouraging role models, and I am so excited to be part of a program that provides these opportunities to students".  
989.259.5842  
aaronh@therock4yd.org

# FAQ

Frequently asked questions about The ROCK.

## What do your programs cost?

The ROCK after-school programs will be provided at no charge, though families are encouraged to make donations to the best of their ability. Quality after-school programs are costly and we need family support to continue to provide this critical service.

## Are you part of The Greater Midland Community Center?

The ROCK Center for Youth Development is its own entity, though GMCC is a valued partner organization. Our offices, as well as The ROCK Underground, are located inside GMCC.

## Are you a faith-based organization?

We are not affiliated with any religion nor are we faith-based. We do believe in the importance of ethics and values which you can learn more about on our website at [www.therock4yd.org](http://www.therock4yd.org)

## Is The ROCK only for at-risk kids?

The ROCK is for all teens! Our programs are shown to be effective with most middle and high school students.

## Is The ROCK after school program a daycare?

We are a 'Center for Youth Development', which means that we offer quality, results-driven programming. Our after school program is not a daycare, but a full-service experience. We offer snacks, tutors, games and sports, with highly-trained and interactive staff, making us the premier opportunity for teens.



# GET INVOLVED

Volunteers are critical to The ROCK.

We welcome volunteers with a wide range of skills and interests and we have opportunities for both adult volunteers and youth volunteers. If you want to volunteer your time and talent where you can make a difference in the community, visit our website under "Give" and fill out an application, or email [kylie@therock4yd.org](mailto:kylie@therock4yd.org).

## TYLER'S JOKE OF THE DAY

What do peppers do when they get angry?  
They get jalapeño face!

# ROCK STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Our staff is well trained and ready to positively interact with your teen.

It takes a highly qualified person to make something look easy. The ROCK staff do that every day. When you walk past a ROCK program and see teens running, laughing, yelling and having fun please don't think for a second that it is out of control and no one is in charge. Consider replacing those thoughts with "Wow, The ROCK team makes this look easy and it is impressive that they can operate safely and efficiently like that."



Before a person can become a member of The ROCK staff they are interviewed, references are contacted, and background checks are completed. Staff members are intentionally hired, and trained for the position of Youth Development Specialist. They are high quality individuals who truly care about teens and work diligently to insure the safety and well-being of every youth in our programs.

The title "Youth Development Specialists" was chosen because that is who they are and what they do. They specialize in youth development.

Professionals are trained and developed and that happens at The ROCK as well. Staff undergo an initial eight hour orientation. Throughout the year, staff have scheduled professional development days. Staff are taught positive youth interaction, engagement, and inclusion, fair discipline methods, crisis management, building individual resilience and leveraging strengths. Team leaders are also CPR and first aid certified. Tutors are generally students from Northwood University or volunteers and go through similar training.

Each after-school site has an experienced Team Leader (see front) and benefits from the over-sight of The ROCK Grounded and Unplugged Program Director Lacey Wright. Good, qualified people are the key to our success and the success of the teens we serve.

The ROCK has helped our family a lot. I have two sons at Seibert Elementary and the schools get out at different times. Without the ROCK, it would be very difficult to find after school care for my daughter. Also, I really appreciate that they have homework support. My daughter can concentrate on getting some of her homework done at the ROCK and gives her some down time at home in the evenings.  
-Parent Quote

# STUDENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in The ROCK's programs is subject to the observance of The ROCK's rules and procedures. Any participant or staff member who violates this code is subject to discipline, up to and including removal from the program.

## At The ROCK:

The emotional and physical safety and well-being of our youth is our main priority. Participation in ROCK programs will be a positive experience for everyone. All interactions with youth, parents, school staff, staff members, volunteers or community members will be for the ultimate benefit of the youth and the community.

The following behaviors are unacceptable during ROCK programs:

- ⇒ Bullying or taking unfair advantage of any participant.
- ⇒ Discourtesy or rudeness to a fellow participant, staff member or volunteer.
- ⇒ Verbal, physical or visual harassment of another participant, staff member or volunteer.
- ⇒ Actual or threatened violence toward any individual or group.
- ⇒ Endangering the life, safety, health or well-being of others.
- ⇒ Failure to follow any ROCK policy or procedure.
- ⇒ Failing to cooperate with an adult supervisor/leader/mentor.
- ⇒ Possession, use of, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- ⇒ Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials such as explosives, firearms, weapons or other similar items.



# THANK YOU TCC AND THE MIDLAND EAGLE RIDERS!

A big giant "thank you" to The Midland Eagle Riders for joining us for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual TCC Poker Run fundraiser to support The Rock Center for Youth Development. We raised \$1798 for this very special organization that helps kids right here in our own community!

During our Family Fun Day, we gave away over 175 backpacks to area kids. The kids and their families enjoyed rock climbing, a bouncy house, face painting, carnival games, free "tattoos", live music, snow cones and more than 250 free meals.

TCC would like to thank Chris Dexter from Jet's Pizza for all of his time and effort in helping us make this a success! Chris not only donated his sales from the event, but he helped with set up, supplies, ideas, etc. He was a vital part of this event and we are most grateful for his participation!

Special thanks to Black Ball Tattoo and their entire team for not only going the extra mile to create an exciting experience for the kids who came to the Family Fun Day of the event, but for also donating \$450 of their artistry to the cause!!

Thank you to Joe Babcock and Nate Hebner for donating their time and talent and providing the music for the entire event.

Thank you also to Pop Pop's Gourmet Popcorn, The Smoke Shop, Dan Dan the Mattress Man, Home Depot, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Thomas Trading Post, The H Hotel, Jet's Pizza, and Black Ball Tattoo for their time and generous donations to our silent auction. The auction raised over \$400 for the kids!!

Finally, a giant thank you to Family Medicine, and The Delfield Company for their huge donations to the cause!

TCC of Midland



## ZOMBIES NEEDED

WHO: Everyone  
WHERE: Midland City Forest  
WHEN: October 15, 2016  
TIME: 4:13 PM  
Put on your best zombie costume, and come volunteer at this year's Zombie Run! Call Lacey at 835-2542 if interested. If you are interested in running, register at [www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/zombierun](http://www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/zombierun)



## HOMWORK HELP

WHO: Teens  
WHERE: Grounded Locations  
WHEN: Everyday Afterschool  
PRICE: FREE  
Students can join The ROCK tutors afterschool to get help with homework! Parents and teachers, email [rock4ydhomeworkhelp@gmail.com](mailto:rock4ydhomeworkhelp@gmail.com) with the name and location of your student if you'd like to contact our tutors!



## JOBS 101

WHO: High School Students  
WHERE: GMCC  
WHEN: Wednesdays, 9/28-11/16  
TIME: 3:30-5:30  
PRICE: FREE  
Learn skills to help you find, get, and keep a job while exploring exciting career paths. Completion of program guarantees an interview for an actual job! Contact Tyler at [tyler@therock4yd.org](mailto:tyler@therock4yd.org)



## LOCK IN

WHO: Teens  
WHERE: GMCC  
WHEN: Coming in 2017!  
Keep your eye out for more information on our upcoming lock in, which will take place in early 2017! We'll pull an all-nighter swimming, playing games, watching movies, dancing, eating, and so much more! Contact Lacey at 989-835-2542 or [lacey@therock4yd.org](mailto:lacey@therock4yd.org) for more information.

## STAFF CONNECTIONS

Please tear off and save this section.

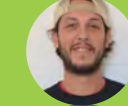
Team leads have their phones on them at all times during the program and check emails frequently. Feel free to contact them with any questions or concerns, or just to let them know you are on your way.



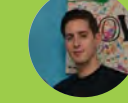
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