

Jenna Phillips, a Shinning Star Example of Inspiration for Del Norte Youth

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Opinion

In Del Norte County, where leaving public education is but a transition for most young people to move from public school to the County's Department of Health and Human Services, it is refreshing to learn in the pages of The Triplicate, a young lady has spurned the entreaties of DHHS in this case not being vulnerable or in need of "saving." Apologies DHHS Director Ranell Brown, it seems not every young person is in need of your life-crushing services.

It would appear, a certain young lady has a positive plan for her future. Sixteen-year-old Crescent City Sgt. Police Explorer, Jenna Phillips is bypassing a lifetime stint of lining up at 880 Northcrest Drive for a plethora of monthly handouts. Once she has graduated from Del Norte High School, the young lady plans to attend Cal Poly Humboldt working towards a future career in law enforcement as a K-9 handler. My best wishes for her future success. Words fall short in expressing my pride for Jenna Phillips.

While most local youth have little idea of what the future will bring, public education should be the vehicle which births the potential of the future in each of our youth. Unfortunately, in the Del Norte Unified School District this has not been the case for many decades. Indoctrination and intervention rule local educational efforts, which leads for many to an inevitable transfer from K12 to Human Services.

In a world of participation trophies, and specious concern for meaningless causes, it is refreshing to be able to express support for a young person, Miss Phillips, who has community and service in the right order. The fact Jenna will be perfecting her craft as a K-9 handler over the next few years and intends to return to the City as a full-fledged CCPD K-9 officer is a double bonus where law enforcement needs the kind of local commitment often lacking at both the Sheriff's office and the City's Police department.

Too often, young people with an idea of where they would like to be in the future as adults do not receive the necessary recognition, attention and support early in life from the community they grow up in. Local citizens witness, for the most part, vacuous reports and accompanying celebratory photos of prominent people who are not the future in Del Norte County, but the past. Community service is measured in years of service at annual Chamber of Commerce dinners where performance in reality is largely unknown to local residents. Shameful!

Community service by our youth is regularly ignored in many circumstances and lacks commitment and encouragement to our future leaders, young folks like Jenna.

I groan every time I see another picture of former Councilman Blake Inscore, or any number of local leaders giving yet another wall decoration to someone nobody knows for doing what should be done without comment.

Hence, it is refreshing to see an article in the local newspaper with a report of a young lady with a bright future ahead. Perhaps the local Chamber of Commerce, Crescent City, or the County's Board of Supervisors would step up and encourage such commitment by Miss Phillips at the beginning of life and set an example of recognition and encouragement for other youth in the County.

It is quite possible by extending such recognition and encouragement early and often, young people will go forth to be educated and return to the County to take up meaningful careers. Miss Philips is a sterling example as to what to do with one's life and should be the template for decreasing local dependence on DHHS and greatly improving quality of life in one of the most beautiful places to live in California.

Carry on Miss Jenna Philips. Make us all proud.