

Make Youth a Priority in our City
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Parent and Youth Worker

I have lived in Morgan County for 25 years, and have been a youth worker for nearly most of that time. I have devoted my life to helping our young people grow in their faith, and teaching them how to give back to their community through doing acts of service, and positive youth development activities.

Allowing our young people to serve others and have a voice in city government grooms them to be strong leaders now. They are quite capable of it. If Phil Deckard is given the chance to lead and promote this community in the positive light that it needs and should be in, our young people will be encouraged to live and work in Martinsville, instead of moving away to other counties or states. Mr. Deckard is a mentor, friend and empowering role model to our young people. The youth in Martinsville are “starving” for a change in their city.

Working with the youth, I also have much interaction and opportunity to hear what their parents have to say about the way things are in today’s world. Here are some of the things that parents are concerned about:

- Lack of moral character and accountability in adults in leadership positions
- Youth have few adult role models to guide them
- A need for more “mentoring” programs, schools and churches can’t do it all
- Alcohol, marijuana and prescription drug abuse by youth is high and will increase if those in leadership positions don’t begin to make youth a higher priority
- Family stress (low-paying jobs, addictions, abuse, hopelessness)

The list goes on and on for concern.

Personally, I am tired of hearing about all of the things that have been wrong, mishandled, forgotten, or passed over by the current or past leadership. The youth aren’t complaining about all of that baggage, they are complaining about the adults who are continuing to dwell on it and can’t seem to rise above it! The youth in Martinsville are concerned about being and living in a safe, caring, youth-friendly community. A community where young people are priority, family is valued, and everyone pulls together to help raise our children! If we do not put our children at the top of the list for our future community development, we might as well roll up these sidewalks and call it a day.

If you are 18 years old, you have earned the right to vote! You can exercise that right and make the difference with your vote on May 8th! The youth in Martinsville deserve to be heard, respected, empowered and given a chance to thrive in their community! Phil Deckard is a man of faith, family values, and good character. He is the real deal and will tell you like it is, not what he thinks you want to hear.