

# EDGEWOOD

WINTER 2021



PRSR1 STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
Seattle, WA  
Permit No. 1  
ECRWSS  
Postal Customer



# The Edgewood Experience: Youth in Government

**F**ive local high schools (Chief Leschi, Fife, Puyallup, Sumner, and Walker) joined the City in creating a brand new program called the "Edgewood Experience". Teachers and counselors from each school worked with the City to select five students to attend the six-week program from July 12th through August 18th. The group of students took a behind-the-scenes look at how the City operates.

The Edgewood Experience required City employees to reflect on what they do, how they accomplish it, and why it matters. Each staff member was asked to share their background, motivation, and lead the students through a 'day-in-the-life of' adventure. Martin Luther King, Jr., motivated enthusiasm in people, especially young people, in the political process and preached about servant leadership. Through this program, by hosting conversations between the City and these students, we hope to similarly inspire the next generation of community leaders.

Each student was asked to reflect on their experience during the program. The reflection process included both presenting to City Council (08/17/21) and writing the remainder of this magazine article. The students worked together to share their thoughts with you. Please enjoy!

*"We all have a deeper appreciation for the work that cities do. The experience taught us more about how people can work with city governments and the benefit of keeping updated on the issues that cities are working on."*

## First impression when your teachers told you about this program

*This was a unique opportunity to learn more about city government because our schools usually just focus on US history and the federal government.*

## What did you hope to learn?

*We hoped to learn about how governments serve communities. We wanted to learn about what it takes to accomplish City projects like new streets or parks. We were also interested in finding out why cities are all unique.*

## Favorite parts

*It was a lot of fun meeting students from different schools and becoming friends with them. We enjoyed meeting all the City staff members and guest speakers who shared what they do and why it is important. We really enjoyed learning about the Public Works department when we took a "Tour of Edgewood" meeting people who provide important services to citizens (like water and sewer).*

## Most surprising/ interesting parts

*We were all surprised with how many different types of jobs people have at the City of Edgewood. They are not careers that we hear about in school. It was eye-opening to see how many departments must work together on different projects.*

*The departments did things that were very interesting and important like:*

- **Human Resources-** making sure that employees have a good work environment
- **Finance-** managing the money that a City needs to serve the community
- **IT and Facilities-** Keeping City Hall running properly
- **Building-** working with builders to have safe homes in Edgewood
- **Public Works-** providing utilities to people every day, and maintaining streets and parks
- **Planning-** thinking about the future of a city, and helping citizens create plans for it

## How will this experience help you in the future?

*We learned about all the different ways that Edgewood employees got to their position. This experience helped us all learn about different careers to consider. We all have a deeper appreciation for the work that cities do. The experience taught us more about how people can work with city governments and the benefit of keeping updated on the issues that cities are working on.*

## What would you tell next year's participants?

*Don't be scared. Feel free to ask questions and have a good time. Take the chance to bond with the other students. Listen to what staff has to say because they all have important information to share and really understand what they are doing. The six weeks go by fast, and you won't regret being part of this special program!*

To find out more information about the Edgewood Experience program, please contact Associate Planner Evan Hietpas at 253-831-4254 or [evan@cityofedgewood.org](mailto:evan@cityofedgewood.org)

## ◀ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

before. I found that there was so much expression in how they looked at me. It was beautiful. I was adapting and suddenly it was okay. The complaining stopped and realized I had found a way to embrace change. I would be okay and so would my family.

As a city, we continue to model our vision statement of being "A unique, safe, and prosperous community of neighbors". It is going to require additional time

and resources along with a significant amount of patience and communication to fulfill this vision. You as a citizen are encouraged to get involved in our city. Simply by reading this publication you are already taking steps towards being more informed. We have numerous boards that support and bring value to our community. I encourage you to get involved and let your uniqueness be seen.

One thing that I will take with me as I end my tenure on this council, the needs of a city are complex and can be

unpredictable. Our city is alive and filled with possibilities. None of us are alone and facing change together makes us stronger.

I'm excited to see what our city will look like in the years to come, and I hope that you are as well. It's been an extreme pleasure serving my community and I wish all of you the very best that change can bring.

**Tyron Christoperson**  
Position #1