

Published August 5th, 2020

Stanley student undeterred in anti-racism effort

By Pippa Fisher



Adam Dolberg shows his Black Lives Matter rock garden at the trail entrance near Stanley Middle School. Photo Pippa Fisher

For one Lafayette boy who simply wanted to highlight Black Lives Matter with a rock garden along the trail near Stanley Middle School, his work has been turned into one of persistence and determination. That's because, despite finding his work vandalized on an almost daily basis, he refuses to give up.

Adam Dolberg, a 12-year-old student at Stanley, says he was inspired to create his rock garden following the June 7 BLM rally in Lafayette which he attended with his mother, Becky Webster. Adam found the speakers' stories at the rally moving, and searched for a way he could do something. "I just wanted to support the cause," says Adam.

Adam explains that he wanted to do something to draw attention to BLM and the racism endured by Black, Indigenous, people of color. After hearing how a friend of his mother's in Sacramento created a rock garden, he decided to do the same.

Using small rocks he painted with individual letters, Adam spelled out "Black Lives Matter." Through word of mouth he encouraged others in the community to decorate rocks to add to his display located near the entrance to the trail by Stanley.

Adam checks his display every day and, since the very beginning, was finding most mornings that the rocks spelling "Black" were taken out of the message.

"At first I thought it was a prank," says Webster. She says she became very discouraged but that Adam refused to give up. He has replaced his stones more than 20 times, even decorating a heavy, larger paving stone that they hoped would discourage theft, but that was taken too.

They say they will continue replacing the rocks as long as needed, and they encourage other members of the community to decorate and add their own rocks to spread the anti-racism message.

Adam joined the first Zoom meeting of the Racial Equity Task Force and explained his experience. Webster has asked Lafayette Vice Mayor Susan Candell, chair of the newly formed task force, about the possibility of finding a protected space for the rock garden and together they have been looking at a new location, possibly near the Lafayette Community Center.

The matter is expected to be placed on an August city council meeting agenda, as such an action would require a full council vote.

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