



Brittany Lewin, 17, places a yard sign in the 800 block of Eagle Drive in Loveland on Oct. 19 as she campaigns for Bob Schaffer, a Republican running for the Colorado State Board of Education. *in weekly photo/staves/stopher*

can't vote; can help

By AMANDA RACE
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She won't be able to vote this year, but that hasn't stopped 17-year-old Greeley resident Brittany Lewin from becoming involved in the political process. Lewin is taking a front seat to this year's election process for Colorado's State Board of Education 4th Congressional District, as Bob Schaffer's (R-Fort Collins) campaign manager.

"I won't be able to vote, but it's amazing how much of an influence you can still have," Lewin said. "Being young, a lot of people look at me and are like, 'what are you doing' or 'how you can you be the campaign manager?'"

In fact, the majority of Schaffer's campaign staff won't be able to vote this election, due to Schaffer's decision to have an all youth-run campaign.

"I think having a youth-run campaign is very fitting for this seat because, as a student, working to improve education is really important," Lewin said.

"I never thought I would get a chance so soon to make a difference in my future."

Lewin first became involved in politics while working as an intern for state Rep. Ted Harvey (R-Douglas County) from January to May of this year. She later met Schaffer at a Republican breakfast she attended in Weld County.

"I wanted to work for Bob because he has so much integrity," Lewin said. "I think he is an incredible leader with tons of experience. He kept his term-limit pledge, which I think shows that."

Multiple attempts to contact Schaffer's opponent, Democrat Tom Griggs, to profile young staffers on his campaign went unanswered.

Because Lewin is home schooled, she is able to balance her work for Schaffer's campaign with her studies, which she admits keeps her quite busy. "I just have to prioritize and get everything done," Lewin said.

One project she has been

working hard to organize is a yard-sign contest, which Lewin hopes will get even more young people involved. The contest encourages young people with a political interest to make their own signs to support Schaffer and then display them in their yards.

"Young people need to be involved because you can make a difference even at a young age. The world and the country in the future are based on the decisions you make today," Lewin said. "You can help influence what kind of environment you want in the future by working for the leaders who support your vision."

She said the campaign always is looking for more students to get involved.

"I think once you get involved in politics, you're stuck," Lewin said. "I am just learning so much from Bob and all his experience. He wants Colorado to be a national example for the education system and he wants students to benefit from his work."