

CROYA vows to continue to serve despite cuts

By **LINDA BLASER**
lblaser@pioneerlocal.com

Despite budget cuts that resulted in the loss of a high school youth worker, CROYA (Committee Representing Our Young Adults) vows to continue serving area teens.

For the duration of the school year, CROYA will keep current programs in place.

On the high school side, CROYA Assistant Director Todd Nahigian will work with school staff and other CROYA staff to provide services to the high school community that includes Lake Forest High School, Woodlands Academy and Lake Forest Academy.

Long-term, representatives from the CROYA board, schools, city, village of Lake Bluff and both local police departments have been working to prioritize youth services, CROYA Director Kamy Daddano said.

'Youth-driven'

Students will be involved in the process, Daddano said, "to reinforce CROYA's mission of being a youth-driven organization."

The plan will be implemented in the fall for the 2010-2011 school year.

A high priority will be given to "help educate and support community-wide awareness and in supporting the young adult population," Daddano said.

For fiscal year 2010, the City of Lake Forest budgeted \$609,447 for CROYA. The proposed 2011 fiscal year budget slashes near-

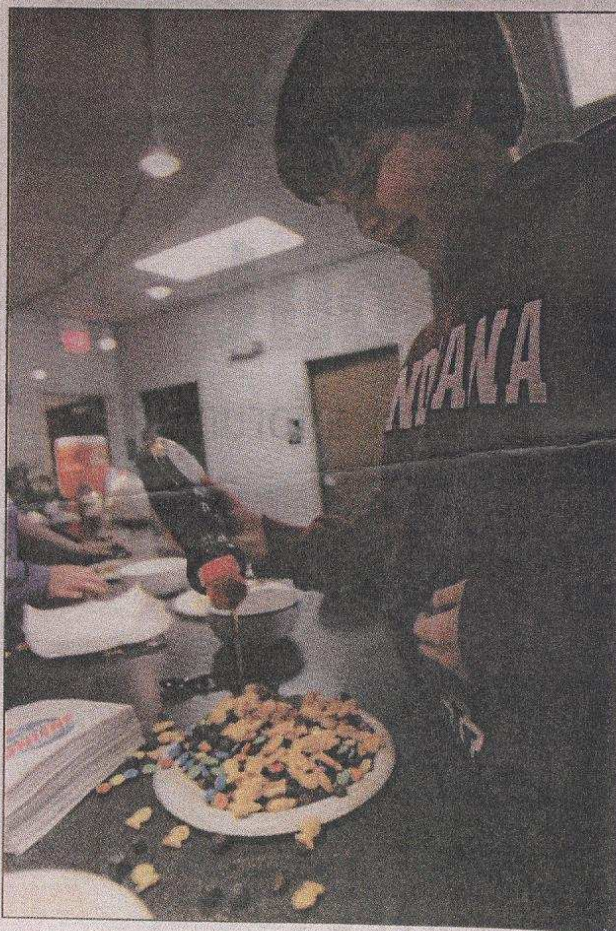
ly \$50,000 from that amount. The Village of Lake Bluff plans to give CROYA \$105,000 in the next fiscal year, a \$35,000 drop. Lake Forest school districts will give \$12,500 less. CROYA leadership recommended the elimination of one high school youth worker, which had been funded by the LF city budget, to save money.

Of the economic downturn that has caused cities and school districts across the state to slash their budgets this year, Daddano

said: "These are challenging times. Obviously, our communities are not immune."

In response to community questions about the possibility of the CROYA Foundation funding the eliminated position, Daddano said that Foundation funds are dedicated to supporting programming costs only. Personnel-related expenses are 84 percent of the CROYA budget.

Comment: pioneerlocal.com



Reed Burns, 13, of Lake Forest tops pancakes with syrup -- and more -- during the "Brunch Break" event at the CROYA Student Union on Monday. (Ruthie Hauge/Staff Photographer)