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Room 203  
9/21/08

### Neighborhood Hero

My neighborhood hero is Zach Komes. Zach Komes is a kid who lives on the corner of Hi Mount Boulevard and Vine Street. That's the street behind my house. Zach is a high school freshman. He is 14 and goes to Rufus King High School. What I like about Zach is that he helps a lot with charitable causes, even though he's still a kid. Zach does a lot in everyday life that some adults wouldn't think of doing. He comes up with his own ideas too. It isn't like his parents are telling him what to do.

For instance, Zach owns his own business, EZ Coffee. EZ stands for Zach and Elsa, Zach's little sister, who is from Colombia. EZ also means easy to use! EZ Coffee only happens during the summer on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The coffee stand is on the corner of his street, and his little sister Elsa, and their friend Sydney Plumb help out. They sell coffee and pastries that Sydney makes in the morning. It's kind of like a lemonade stand, only with coffee. Every year Zach and Elsa and Sydney come up with a new charity to give the money to. They give all the money to the charity. They don't keep any of it for themselves. This year

they gave \$1,500 to a charity called UNICEF (United Nation's Children's Fund), so that a village in Africa could have a water well dug and a pump installed. Last year, they gave the money they earned with EZ Coffee to a charity called the Heifer International to buy farm animals for another village in North Africa. Zach won the Youth Leadership Award from the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee for what he did.

Zach supports EZ Coffee with a corporation he made himself called Youth For Change International. Zach started YFCI in 2005 after he won the award. Zach has a website that informs people about things like "The Green Dream." The Green Dream is a campaign that is trying to inform people on global warming. The website is getting 1,500 hits a month. You can go to <http://www.yfci.co.nr> for more information and to read an interview with Zach.

I like Zach because he's a good role model for kids, while he's still at kid himself. He doesn't just sit around and act like he doesn't care. He gets up and going and is there for things he cares about. He's also smart, funny and nice to be around. Zach is not like a lot of other teenagers. He's not a snob or full of himself. The main thing that I really like about him is he can be regular and at the same time make you feel like you can do something amazing like he did. That's my neighborhood hero.