The Quest — A youth celebration of community

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TRAVERSE CITY — The SEEDs After School students have been working with the Earthwork Music Collective and Blackbird on a special program.

The program will honor the 75th anniversary celebration of Alan Lomax's field recordings of Michigan Folk Music for the Library of Congress. A special performance will take place at 7:30 p.m. on May 9 at the City Opera House in Traverse City.

Throughout the spring, middle and high school students from Benzie Central, Brethren, Forest Area, Frankfort, Kalkaska, Manistee, and Suttons Bay Schools have been preparing for the performance by studying local history, exploring personal journeys, learning songs from the Lomax archives, and writing new material for the concert production.

Seth Bernard, founder of the Earthwork Music Collective and one of the musician-instructors explains the project, “With the students, we're listening to old recordings, discussing what we hear in them and rewriting them based on our own experiences and perspective. What's been coming out is music that is true to the times that we live in and also dips into the rich, local cultural heritage."

“It is important to offer outlets for youth to express themselves in their own voices. Equally important is to ground them in the historical context of their home. We are excited to bring students from as far away as Manistee and Kalkaska together to share their personal journeys and to join as one ensemble for this remarkable event," says SEEDS Executive Director, Sarna Salzman.

Lori Summers, Michigan Lomax Project Coordinator for the Michigan State University Museum adds, “It's exciting to see new uses for the Alan Lomax Michigan Collection emerge from young people!” (The Lomax Michigan collections were also recently exhibited at the Dennos Museum.)

The public is invited to join in this celebration of community.