



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF AMERICA**

### Fact Sheet: Youth of the Year

- GOAL:** To recognize exceptional Boys & Girls Club youth and give them the voice and path to showcase personal development and achieve their dreams.
- WHY:** Club members deserve to be recognized for their character, personal growth, leadership qualities and outstanding achievements. Such youth demonstrate what can be achieved by participating in Boys & Girls Clubs.
- WHO:** Boys & Girls Club members ages 14-18
- WHAT:** The **Youth of the Year** recognition program is the cornerstone of BGCA's Character and Leadership core program area. It promotes and celebrates young people's service to the Club, community and family; academic performance; moral character; life goals; and poise and public speaking abilities. A mainstay of the Boys & Girls Club experience, the year-round program helps young people develop the skills needed to be successful Youth of the Year candidates and productive adults. Several past winners have gone on to graduate school and to work in the U.S. Peace Corps.

The program begins by recognizing youth at the Club level, where Clubs are encouraged to select Youths of the Month to help build participation throughout the year. Winners go on to participate in state and regional competition.

- **Club Finalists:** Local judges choose a Club Youth of the Year from three finalists. By this point, candidates have been nominated, written essays, gathered support letters and prepared short speeches. All local winners go on to compete at the state level.
- **State, Regional and National Finalists:** State winners receive a \$1,000 scholarship award and advance to competitions in BGCA's Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and Pacific regions. The five regional winners then participate in the national competition, which takes place annually in Washington, D.C. Participants are recognized at a Congressional Breakfast and also visit with the President at the White House. Each regional winner receives an engraved plaque and a \$10,000 scholarship. The national winner receives the National Youth of the Year plaque and an additional scholarship award of \$15,000.

**WEB SITE:** [www.bgca.net](http://www.bgca.net); click on: 1) Programs; 2) Character & Leadership; 3) Youth of the Year

**CONTACT:** Kelvin W. Davis, Senior Director, Character and Citizenship,  
(404) 487-5762, [kdavis@bgca.org](mailto:kdavis@bgca.org)  
Eve P. Respass, Assistant Director, Character and Citizenship,  
(404) 487-5804, [erespass@bgca.org](mailto:erespass@bgca.org)