



2021-2022 National Youth of the Year Brianna P.

2023 YOUTH OF THE YEAR APPLICATION KIT

Since 1947, Youth of the Year has been Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier recognition program, celebrating Club members' extraordinary achievements. Each year, one exceptional Club member is selected to be the National Youth of the Year. This person serves as an exemplary ambassador for Boys & Girls Club youth and as a strong voice for all of our nation's young people.

The journey to being named National Youth of the Year begins locally and progresses to the state, regional and national levels. To achieve the title of Youth of the Year on any level, Club members must embody the values of leadership and service, academic excellence and healthy lifestyles. They should exemplify the critical impact Boys & Girls Clubs have on the lives of young people.

Qualifications

Youth Advocacy: Youth of the Year representatives should be able to speak up and/or take action for themselves and/or others to support a cause or purpose they believe in.

Knowledge of Boys & Girls Club Movement

Priorities: Youth of the Year representatives should have at least basic knowledge about current BGCA programming and events. They should be able to speak clearly about their Club Experience and the vital role the Club plays in providing opportunities for youth in their communities. They should be committed to leveraging the coaching and support of BGCA staff to become stronger in this area.

Communication: Youth of the Year representatives should possess strong verbal and written communication skills. They should be able to articulate the impact their Club Experience has had on their lives. They should feel comfortable and confident both in delivering prepared speeches and answering spontaneous questions. They should also have strong listening skills.

Relational Ability: Youth of the Year representatives should demonstrate a high degree of relational ability by listening with understanding when others are speaking and thoughtfully answering questions. They should be able to appreciate diverse backgrounds and cultures, see the world from multiple perspectives and understand the value of these differences. They should be inclusive and able to effectively communicate and build relationships with others.

Character: Youth of the Year representatives are ambassadors for the Movement and youth around the world. They must emulate the highest standards of character, including trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness and caring.

- **Trustworthiness:** Honest in communications and actions; reliable; has the courage to do the right thing; loyal and keeps promises
- **Respect:** Treats others with respect; tolerant and accepting of differences; considerate of others' feelings; peacefully resolves conflicts
- **Responsibility:** Does what they say they will do; plans ahead; perseveres; does their best; uses self-control and self-discipline; accountable for words, actions and attitudes; sets a good example for others; and makes healthy choices
- **Fairness:** Open-minded; listens to others; treats all people fairly
- **Caring:** Kind; compassionate; shows empathy; expresses gratitude; charitable; helps others
- **Citizenship:** Makes the world better; involved; volunteers; obeys laws and rules; respects authority

Failing to maintain these standards could lead to the YOY being asked to relinquish their title and forfeit any scholarship dollars related to the YOY program.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applications must include each item noted below. Check off each item on this page as you complete them. Note: Once applications are submitted, they cannot be altered!

Essays Essay instructions are included in this kit.

The three required essays are:

- 1. My Club Experience
- 2. What Matters to Me
- 3. Personal Growth

Recommendations Instructions are included in this kit.

Letters should be submitted as PDF attachments to rjemison@bgcafamilycenter.org

- 4. The required letter of recommendation is: A Community Recommendation

Return Application by March 24, 2023 5pm

**Send to 100 Acorn st Springfield Ma 01109 or leave with the front receptionist.
Please put essays in a envelope with your Name, email and Phone number!**

Or

**Email Essays to Rjemison@bgcafamilycenter.org With the headline {YOY 23
Family center and your first and last name}**

ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

Please use these instructions to help develop your essays. Allow each of the questions and prompts to guide you. Your essays will be judged on content, writing style, clarity and grammar. Work with staff members at your Club to make sure essays are well written and compelling. Each essay has a character limit of 5,000, including spaces. (This is roughly the equivalent of a two-page document typed in 11-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 line spacing.)

Essay 1: My Club Experience

Explain why you come to the Club and how it impacted your life. Consider the following prompts.

- Describe the skills you have developed and strengthened (e.g., self-awareness, communication, goal setting).
- Describe activities you have participated in or roles you filled.
- Describe a supportive relationship with a peer or adult at the Club.
- Describe examples of your participation in Club community engagement efforts (e.g., campaigns, presentations, service-learning projects)

Essay 2: What Matters to Me

A great foundation for leadership begins with identifying interests, passions and issues that are important to you. Actions and daily practices shaped by these things help you to be an advocate in your Club or community. For example, if you are passionate about the environment, you practice and advocate for recycling in your Club or

home. Consider the following prompts.

- What sparks your interest or passion?
- What is an issue that is important to you?
- Describe an interest or passion that you have put into action or plan to in the future.

Essay 3: Personal Growth

This topic is taken directly from the Common Application essay prompts. The Common Application is a platform used by many colleges. Take extra care when drafting this section, as you may be able to use it again when applying to the colleges and universities of your choice. Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. Consider the following prompts.

- Highlight some of the strengths you possess that helped you in your journey.
- What did you learn?
- Why is it important to develop an understanding of others?

RECOMMENDATION INSTRUCTIONS

As a Youth of the Year candidate, you must request a letter of recommendation to affirm your leadership experiences and abilities. The National Youth of the Year is primarily selected based on their leadership experiences and commitment to community service. The purpose of the letters of recommendation is to clarify how you exemplify these qualities. Ask caring adults who can directly comment on your experiences and abilities to write their recommendations. Please include contact information for each letter writer. Once letters are completed, send them to rjemison@bgcafamlycenter.org

Also ask the letter writer to include their signature, title and email address. Forward the following instructions to help them draft their letter.

Community Recommendation

This letter should be written by an adult member of your community (not a family member or Club staff) who can tell about your positive actions in the community and how you demonstrate leadership skills and other abilities. Please ask the person you select to print their letter on official letterhead, as appropriate, and to include their signature, title, email address and physical address. Also forward the following background and instructions to help them draft their letter.

What is Youth of the Year?

Since 1947, Youth of the Year has been Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier recognition program, celebrating Club members' extraordinary achievements. Each year, one exceptional Club member is selected to be the National Youth of the Year. This person serves as an exemplary ambassador for Boys & Girls Club youth and as a strong voice for all of our nation's young people. Please discuss the candidate's suitability to hold the National Youth of the Year title. Consider the following prompts:

- Values, interests and goals
- Experiences as a leader and team member within the community
- Personal accomplishments and achievements, and the skills they have demonstrated to do this
- The impact the Boys & Girls Club has had on the candidate Please include examples that highlight the candidate's potential for future leadership success

RECOMMENDATION INSTRUCTIONS

As a Youth of the Year candidate, you must request two letters of recommendation to affirm your leadership experiences and abilities. One letter needs to be from a person in the Club, and the second should be from someone in the community.

The National Youth of the Year is primarily selected based on their leadership experiences and commitment to community service. The purpose of these letters of recommendation is to clarify how you exemplify these qualities. Ask caring adults who can directly comment on your experiences and abilities to write their recommendations. Please include contact information for each letter writer. Once letters are completed, scan and submit them through the online portal as attachments.

Recommendation 1 Club Recommendation

This letter should be written by a Club professional. Please ask the person you select to print their letter on Club/Organization letterhead. Also ask the letter writer to include their signature, title and email address. Forward the following instructions to help them draft their letter.

Please discuss the candidate's suitability to hold the title of National Youth of the Year. Consider the following prompts:

- Commitment to leadership, character and community service
- Values, interests and goals
- Experiences as a leader and team member within the Club community

Please include examples that highlight the candidate's potential for future leadership success.

Recommendation 2

Community Recommendation

This letter should be written by an adult member of your community (not a family member or Club staff) who can tell about your positive actions in the community and how you demonstrate leadership skills and other abilities. Please ask the person you select to print their letter on official letterhead, as appropriate, and to include their signature, title, email address and physical address. Also forward the following background and instructions to help them draft their letter.

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Please include examples that highlight the candidate's potential for future leadership success.

ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

Please use these instructions to help develop your essays. Allow each of the questions and prompts to guide you. Your essays will be judged on content, writing style, clarity and grammar. Work with staff members at your Club to make sure essays are well written and compelling. Together, you can access the Youth of the Year Leadership Suite as a resource at BGCA.net/YOY.

Once your drafts are complete, type your final copy directly into the space provided in the application portal. Each essay has a character limit of 5,000, including spaces. (This is roughly the equivalent of a two-page document typed in 11-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 line spacing.)

Essay 1: My Club Experience

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Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. Consider the following prompts.

- Highlight some of the strengths you possess that helped you in your journey.
- What did you learn?
- Why is it important to develop an understanding of others?

**If picked you will go on to the state
round!**

**Round 1 Club Level Applications due
March 24, 2023 5pm**

**(you will be notified via phone if you
were picked or not)**

***See reverse side for responsibilities if
picked at the club level.***



JOB DESCRIPTION

A Youth of the Year (YOY) candidate embodies excellence in Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s three priority outcome areas of Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles. Being named Youth of the Year is the highest honor bestowed upon Club members. The National Youth of the Year serves as a role model and spokesperson for America’s youth. They educate millions of Americans about the power of the Club experience, and elevate the national focus on key issues facing children and teens.

The National YOY is purpose-driven and aware of the challenges facing young people today. Under the direction of BGCA staff, Youth of the Year representatives will attend state, regional and national events. They will serve as thought leaders on key issues by telling their inspiring personal stories. Potential audiences include youth, alumni, members of the media, and political, corporate and community leaders. Youth of the Year representatives may be asked to appear on television, make remarks before public officials and speak at events where they can make a difference. State, regional and national YOYs will serve in this role for one year.

Commitments

The primary commitments include, but are not limited to, the following:

Public Speaking: Youth of the Year representatives deliver speeches – without the use of props, notes or other memory aids – at a variety of events. They will keep speeches updated in an electronic format and if requested, submit them to BGCA staff prior to events. BGCA staff will work with candidates and advisors on a case-by-case basis to ensure an inclusive space for everyone.

Event Participation: Youth of the Year representatives will attend BGCA sponsored events. They may be asked to make remarks, answer questions, and engage guests in conversation. They must strive to remain responsive, courteous, and gracious. Appropriate business attire and punctuality are critical. State Youth of the Year are expected to participate in the Regional Youth of the Year event during the year they are named State Youth of the Year. Regional Youth of the Year are expected to participate in the National Youth of the Year event during the year they are named Regional Youth of the Year. Failure to participate in the successive events will result in the loss of the Youth of the Year title and scholarship awarded from the previous level of Youth of the Year.

Academic Achievement: Youth of the Year representatives must have a strong commitment to academic achievement and improvement, with an emphasis on maintaining excellent grades throughout the year in which they hold the YOY title. State, Regional and National YOYs must maintain a 2.5 GPA to maintain their scholarships.

Leadership

Youth of the Year representatives demonstrate leadership skills as individuals in their interactions with others and in their communities. They create meaningful change and motivate and inspire others.

Self-Leadership: Youth of the Year representatives demonstrate self-awareness and understand personal values. They set goals and take action aligned with their personal values. They make choices that positively impact their lives. And they inspire others.

Leadership With Others: Youth of the Year representatives understand the value of different perspectives, use effective and inclusive communication practices to work together toward a shared goal, and collaborate by including diverse perspectives.

Leadership in the Community: Youth of the Year representatives continuously seek to understand community needs, listen to and engage with people from diverse perspectives, and use self-knowledge and collaborate to make transformative change in communities.