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2014-15 National Youth of the Year Maryah Sullivan

2016 APPLICATION NATIONAL YOUTH OF THE YEAR

Since 1947, Youth of the Year has been Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier recognition program, celebrating the extraordinary achievements of Club members. Each year, one exceptional Club member is selected to be the National Youth of the Year. The National Youth of the Year serves as both 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 that Boys & Girls Clubs have on the lives of young people.

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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA

Dear Boys & Girls Club Leaders,

Now is an exciting time in the 69-year history of the Youth of the Year (YOY) program. Support from Disney, Toyota, University of Phoenix and the Taco Bell Foundation is enabling Boys & Girls Clubs of America to significantly enhance the Youth of the Year experience.

During the 2013-14 Youth of the Year season, BGCA listened to Club leaders, staff members, volunteers, alumni and young people through a series of focus groups, interviews, surveys and discussions. These insights pointed to a clear need to revise the application process, and position the program as a platform for recognizing, cultivating and celebrating Club members' leadership potential. As a result, changes were made for the 2014-15 season.

The most significant change in the application and selection process is a new focus on leadership, character and service; academic excellence; and healthy lifestyles, ensuring candidates will be identified using all three priority outcome areas that drive our Movement-wide agenda.

For instance, the three required letters of recommendation should describe candidates' experience and aptitude in terms of: (1) leadership, character and service; (2) academic excellence; and (3) healthy lifestyles.

In addition, candidates are required to write essays about (1) their Club Experience; (2) their Vision for America's Youth; and (3) what they strive to stand for in the minds and hearts of those who know them, i.e., their Personal Brand as individuals and leaders.

One of the most exciting enhancements is that scholarships on the state, regional and national levels have increased to more than \$1 million annually.

Finally, we will host our second annual three-day Advanced Leaders Institute for all state-level candidates, including military youth. They will be introduced to a series of experiences focused on leadership development, community building, college-readiness and career development that will strengthen their ability to serve as leaders of and ambassadors for America's youth.

In 2015 and the years to come, we will realize a Youth of the Year experience as grand and inspiring as the young people who earn the title. We look forward to this year's showcasing of youth, and welcome your leadership in guiding our continuing steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damon A. Williams'.

Damon A. Williams, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President, Program, Training & Youth Development Services

The Youth of the Year program creates opportunities for Club members to receive recognition at the Club/Youth Center, organization, state, regional and national levels.

Club Level

A Youth of the Year is selected in the local Club/Youth Center from a pool of members who have participated in a year-round recognition program. The local Youth of the Year serves as a role model for other young people in the Club and as a representative to the community.

Organization Level

In multi-unit organizations, only one candidate will be selected from Club/Youth Center-level winners to represent the entire organization and advance to the state and successive levels.

State Level

Each candidate who advances to a state-level event must submit the application materials in this packet, in their entirety, to BGCA National Headquarters. This is a one-time submission; materials from this packet will be reproduced for consideration at each successive level, should the candidate move on to regional and/or national participation. Judges at the state, regional and national levels will consider candidates using the scoring framework in this kit. For that reason, these application materials ask candidates and those who write letters of support to make a case for the candidate's qualification as BGCA's National Youth of the Year.

Regional Level

Candidates selected at the state level participate in their region's Youth of the Year event. No new application is required for participation at this level, but candidates are required to submit a background check authorization form.

National Level

The five candidates named Regional Youth of the Year, along with the National Military Youth of the Year, will travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in a judging process that will determine the National Youth of the Year.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Restrictions: Candidates previously named Regional Youth of the Year are not eligible to participate at the regional or national levels in subsequent years. In multi-unit organizations, only one candidate (i.e., the Youth of the Year selected to represent the entire organization) may advance to the state and successive levels.

Application: Only the 2015-16 application materials will be accepted. Applications must be received no later than the due date. Applications may not be altered once submitted. Applications, including supporting materials, will NOT be returned.

Age: Candidates must be no younger than 14 and no older than 18 years of age on Jan. 31, 2016, to participate in the judging process at the state level.

Attendance: Candidates must have a record of active and continuing membership in a Boys & Girls Club or affiliated Military Youth Center for at least two years prior to Jan. 31, 2016. Membership must be consecutive and may include more than one Club or Organization.

Identification: Acceptable forms of ID include: state-issued driver's license or learner's permit, birth certificate, U.S. passport, Social Security card, certificate of citizenship and naturalization, employment authorization number or Native American identification card. U.S. citizenship is not required.

Status: Candidates advancing to the state level must have been named Youth of the Year for their organization during the current program year (Sept. 1 – Aug. 31). The organization's Chief Executive Officer must sign and approve candidates' applications

Graduate for Más Pledge to Graduate: Candidates must make the pledge for

graduation. Visit <https://getschooled.com/graduate-for-mas>. Be sure to select your Club and Organization when taking the pledge.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Who completes the application?

A professional Club staff member should be assigned to assist the candidate with completion of the application. Candidates should strive to make a favorable first impression on the judges by ensuring the application materials are professional and well-assembled.

How/when are applications submitted?

Completion of this application requires timely submission of all the materials outlined on the checklist (page 9). Only complete applications will be processed and forwarded to the judges for consideration. Please ensure all materials are included in the packet.

Applications must be physically mailed to:

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1275 Peachtree St. NE
Atlanta, GA 30309-3506
Attn: Youth of the Year Program

This application is due 30 days prior to your state Youth of the Year event. All applications must be **received** on or before the deadline date.

All Military Youth Center representatives should follow guidance from BGCA's Military Services team.

What happens after submission?

After the deadline, all complete and approved applications will be forwarded to the judges to be considered as one of three selection criteria (in addition to a speech and interview at the event).

The below four weighted categories will inform the judging process on the state, regional and national levels. Additional instructions for creating the best possible application are found throughout this document. Please reference the individual forms and sections for guidance.

Category	Description	Weight
<p>Candidate Essays</p>	<p>Candidates must write essays about their:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Club Experience 2. Vision for America’s Youth 3. Personal Brand <p>The essays will be judged for content, clarity and overall quality.</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Interview</p>	<p>Candidates should prepare for a 15-minute personal interview with judges. At the state level, the interview may be conducted by one judge and/or a panel of several judges. During the interview, judges will ask each candidate the same questions, but follow-up questions may vary, depending on each candidate’s responses.</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Public Speaking</p>	<p>Candidates should be prepared to deliver a speech based on the content of their three application essays. Speeches may be no longer than three minutes. Candidates are strictly prohibited from using any notes or electronic devices at the state, regional and national levels. Candidates will be judged on speech content, delivery, stage presence and poise.</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Overall Application Quality</p>	<p>Judges will use the following criteria to assess each application: clarity, professionalism, completion of each section, and quality of supplemental materials. For example, each candidate will provide three letters of recommendation from individuals who can personally attest to the candidate’s achievement and potential in terms of (1) leadership, character and service; (2) academic excellence; and (3) healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>25%</p>

The National Youth of the Year embodies Boys & Girls Clubs of America's three priority outcome areas of leadership, character and service; academic excellence; and healthy lifestyles. Being named National Youth of the Year is the highest honor bestowed upon Club members. The National Youth of the Year is a role model and spokesperson for America's youth. He/she will educate millions of Americans about the power of the Club Experience, and elevate the national focus on key issues facing children and teenagers. He/She must be savvy, purpose-driven and aware of the challenges facing young people today.

Under the direction of BGCA staff, the National Youth of the Year will attend regional and national events, and serve as a thought leader on key issues by telling his/her inspiring personal story. Potential audiences include youth; members of the media; and political, corporate and community leaders. The National Youth of the Year may be asked to appear on television, make remarks before public officials, and provide his or her voice at events where it can make a difference. The National Youth of the Year should also help other young people replicate the success he/she has already realized.

PAST YOUTH OF THE YEAR HAVE:

- Met the President of the United States in the Oval Office
- Received scholarships for post-secondary education
- Appeared on national television
- Received awards from sponsors, such as a new Toyota car
- Traveled across the United States
- Met Congressional and legislative leaders
- Served as ambassadors at Youth Centers on military installations around the world
- Met celebrity Club alumni
- Represented BGCA at corporate events
- Interned at companies and organizations around the world
- Served as Young Alumni Ambassadors for BGCA's Alumni & Friends

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Public Speaking: Deliver speeches, without the use of notes or other memory aids, at a variety of events. Keep speeches updated in an electronic format and submit them in advance to BGCA staff prior to events.

Event Participation: Attend frequent BGCA-sponsored events (a calendar of these events will be provided in advance). May be asked to make remarks, answer questions and engage guests in conversation, remaining responsive, courteous and gracious at all times. Appropriate business attire, grooming and punctuality are critical. Inability to attend an event should be brought to the attention of BGCA staff one month in advance of the engagement date.

Brand Ambassador: Speak about youth issues while remaining positive and uplifting, and avoiding negative or derogatory comments. Strive to advance Boys & Girls Clubs of America's mission and garner positive recognition for the Movement in the public eye. Interact with representatives of the news media in a genuine and professional manner.

QUALIFICATIONS

Academic Achievement: Must have a strong academic track record, with special emphasis on maintaining excellent grades throughout the year in which he/she holds the National Youth of the Year title.

Youth Issues: Should have a basic understanding of the challenges facing America's youth and be able to answer questions on a variety of youth topics. Moreover, he/she should commit to undertaking an independent learning plan focused on increasing his/her ability to effectively engage with various audiences on youth issues. He/she should also enthusiastically take advantage of coaching and support provided by BGCA staff members.

Boys & Girls Club Movement Priorities: Should have at least basic knowledge about current BGCA programming and events, and be able to speak clearly about his/her Club Experience and the vital role the Club plays in supporting youth in their communities. The National Youth of the Year should be committed to leveraging the coaching and support of BGCA staff to become stronger in this area.

Communication: Should possess strong verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to speak English proficiently and articulate well-developed ideas that are appropriate for various audiences, such as other Club members, Club staff, donors, government officials and the general public. He/she should feel comfortable and confident both in delivering prepared speeches and answering spontaneous questions.

Relational Ability: Should demonstrate a high degree of relational ability by listening intently when others are speaking and thoughtfully answering questions. He/she should be able to appreciate diverse backgrounds and cultures, see the world from multiple perspectives and understand the value of these differences in creating the American mosaic. The National Youth of the Year should be polite and poised, and able to effectively communicate and build relationships with others.

Leadership and Teamwork: Should have a strong ability to both lead and collaborate with teams. Throughout his/her tenure as National Youth of the Year, he/she will be called upon to serve in both roles, and should be able to effectively transition between having a lead voice and supporting others.

Character, Honesty and Integrity: Be an ambassador for the Boys & Girls Club Movement and youth around the world. He/she must emulate the highest standards of personal character, honesty and integrity – both in public and private.

Failing to maintain these standards could lead to the National Youth of the Year being asked to relinquish the title.

Check off each item on this page to ensure that the application packet is complete. All applications must include each item noted below. *Note: Once applications are submitted, they cannot be altered!*

Forms *Forms are included in this kit. They should be completed, signed and submitted.*

Form A: Candidate Nomination

Form B: Candidate Qualifications

Form C: Candidate Acknowledgment

Form D: Emergency Care Release

Essays *Essay instructions are included on page 14 of this kit. Essays should be composed and typed by the candidate and attached with the application.*

Essay 1: My Club Experience

Essay 2: My Vision for America's Youth

Essay 3: My Personal Brand

Three Recommendations *Instructions are included in this packet. Letters should be attached with application.*

Leadership, Character and Service

Academic Excellence

Healthy Lifestyles

Supporting Materials

Two Supporting Documents *These can be awards/certificates, articles, resumes, etc., that uniquely demonstrate the candidate's achievements and skills in the three outcome areas. Please only select the two items that best support your application.*

Official High School Transcript

Photocopy of Government-issued ID *This can be one of the following forms of identification: state-issued driver's license or learner's permit, birth certificate, U.S. passport, Social Security card, certificate of citizenship and naturalization, employment authorization number, or Native American identification card. U.S. citizenship is NOT required.*

Candidate Photo *A professional headshot of the candidate submitted as a high-resolution jpeg file (300 dpi).*

Graduate for Más Pledge

Graduate for Más: Pledge to Graduate *All candidates must take the pledge at <https://getschooled.com/graduate-for-mas>. (Be sure to select your Club when taking the pledge.) Failure to take the pledge will disqualify the candidate from proceeding.*

Personal Information	Nominee's Full Name (First MI Last)		DOB (MM-DD-YYYY)	Social Security Number	Gender F M	
	Race/Ethnicity American Indian / Alaska Native Asian Black/African-American Hispanic/Latino Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander White/Caucasian More than one race Don't know					
	Street Address		Line 2 (apt, suite, etc.)	Email Address		
	City, State, ZIP Code			Telephone Number	Mobile Number	
	High School Name		Projected Graduation	Preferred T-shirt Size		
	Tentative College Choice		Anticipated Career Choice			
	Length of Club Membership		Number of Volunteer Hours (in the last 12 months)			
Organization Information	Name of Boys & Girls Club Organization			Unit/Extension		
	Street Address		Line 2 (apt, suite, etc.)			
	City, State, ZIP Code		Club Telephone Number	Fax Number		
	Name of Chief Executive Officer		Telephone Number	Email Address		
	Name of Designated Contact for this Form		Telephone Number	Email Address		

ACKNOWLEDGMENT/CERTIFICATION

I hereby consent to print and online publication and use of photographs and information contained in this application – and photos and videos taken during the entire Youth of the Year process from local to national – by Boys & Girls Clubs of America or its agents. I hereby attest that all information contained in this application form and attached supporting materials is, to the best of my knowledge, truthful, accurate and complete, and that I meet all eligibility requirements of the Youth of the Year program. I attest that the essays contained in this application are my original work and represent, to the best of my ability, my own thoughts on the questions put forth.

Candidate Signature: _____

I (we) have received a copy of the application form being submitted on behalf of _____ as a nominee for Youth of the Year. I (we) have reviewed this application in its entirety for accuracy and completeness, and I (we) certify that all information contained in the nomination form is accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge. I (we) affirm that I (we) have been given an opportunity by the Club to correct any misinformation to ensure the accuracy of the application. I (we) consent to allow any information in this application to be made public through any media as deemed necessary by _____ (local Club organization) or by Boys & Girls Clubs of America. I (we) hereby consent to print and online publication and use of photographs and information contained in this application form – and photos and video taken during the entire Youth of the Year process from local to national – by Boys & Girls Clubs of America or its agents. By signing this application, I (we) hereby waive any claims associated with this program against Boys & Girls Clubs of America and its member organizations.

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) Signature: _____

I hereby attest that all information contained in this application form and attached supporting materials is, to the best of my knowledge, truthful, accurate and complete, and that the nominee meets all eligibility requirements of the Youth of the Year program. I certify that a copy of this application was given to the parents/guardians of the nominee, and that they have been given an opportunity to make any corrections/additions to the application to ensure its accuracy.

Chief Executive Officer Signature: _____

FORM B: CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

2016

Type directly in the space provided below to answer each question. Attachments will not be accepted. Answers are limited to the text that can be typed into each space below.

Provide the top three reasons you should be chosen as National Youth of the Year.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Provide three examples of your academic excellence, including advanced courses taken, extracurricular academic activities and awards.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Provide three examples of your service, including community service projects, service learning projects, volunteerism and activism.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Provide three examples of your commitment to healthy lifestyles, including sports, fitness, nutrition, and attitude toward drugs and alcohol.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Provide three examples of what you hope to accomplish as National Youth of the Year.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

By signing this form, candidates and their parent(s)/guardian(s) acknowledge that they have completed the application in full, including supporting documents; that they have read and understand the requirements of the National Youth of the Year job description and qualifications; and have been truthful and honest when completing all forms.

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO CARRY OUT THE STATED QUALIFICATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH OF THE YEAR. I UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO MEET ANY OF THESE COULD DISQUALIFY ME FROM THE PROCESS OR RESULT IN THE LOSS OF MY YOUTH OF THE YEAR TITLE AT THE STATE, REGIONAL OR NATIONAL LEVEL.

I understand that all YOY candidates are subject to a background check, and am aware that details of my personal life and/or my family circumstances may become public knowledge. I understand that my likeness and/or voice may be used for print, web, radio, social media or television purposes.

I certify that all forms and supplemental materials in this packet are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that failure to meet the requirements outlined in the National Youth of the Year Job Description, including those pertaining to character and integrity, will result in a breach of trust. In such case, I agree to forfeit all rights and privileges associated with participation in the program. I further understand that actions that would result in a revocation of the Youth of the Year title include, but are not limited to: arrest, unlawful behavior, acts of dishonesty, taking willful action to become or get someone pregnant outside of marriage, etc. I understand that advancement in the National Youth of the Year process requires overnight travel with a chaperone.

(Candidate Signature)

(Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) Signature)

I have read the National Youth of the Year Job Description, understand the duties that will be required of me and acknowledge that failure to meet these requirements may result in me being asked to step down as National Youth of the Year.

(Candidate Signature)

I have taken the Graduate for Más pledge. _____
(Candidate Signature)

FORM D: EMERGENCY CARE RELEASE

2016

Nominee's Full Name (First MI Last)		DOB (MM-DD-YYYY)	
Family Physician's Name	Physician's Telephone	Date of last DPT or TETANUS shot (MM-DD-YYYY)	
Is your child currently taking any medication? No Yes (Please list name(s) of medications below.)			
If your child allergic to any medication? No Yes (Please list name(s) of medications below.)			
Does your child have any other allergies? No Yes (Please describe below.)			
Name of Insurance Company			
Policy Number	Member Number	Expiration Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	
Parent/Guardian Full Name (First MI Last)		Telephone Number	

ACKNOWLEDGMENT/CERTIFICATION

I hereby give my consent to any emergency facility and physician to administer necessary treatment to my son/daughter (child's name)_____. In the event of an emergency at which time I cannot be reached, I give consent to transport my son/daughter by ambulance to a medical facility for treatment, and I take full responsibility for this action and agree to pay any expenses incurred for this treatment.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

ORGANIZATION VERIFICATION

As a person with authority on behalf of my Boys & Girls Club organization, the foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me on the ____ day of _____, 2016 by _____(parent or guardian) who is personally known to me or who has produced _____(type of identification) as identification.

Organization Representative Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Please respond to each of the following questions with as much thought and clarity as possible. Essays must be typed in Times New Roman font, 1-½ line spacing, no more than two pages and clearly labeled with headers or footers containing the candidate's name and state. Each essay should be clearly labeled. Please note that essays will be judged based on content, writing style, clarity and grammar. You are encouraged to work with staff members at your Club to develop well-written, compelling essays.

Essay 1: My Club Experience

Describe your time in the Club, including how long you've been a member, key aspects of your Club involvement, and the most important contributions the Club has made to your academic, personal and leadership development. Please share any ways in which the Club has helped you overcome challenges or obstacles that you may have experienced. Be sure to highlight any significant leadership roles you've held at the Club, as well as other participation in Club programs, service initiatives, etc.

Essay 2: My Vision for America's Youth

The National Youth of the Year is BGCA's ambassador for America's young people. He/she represents the interests of millions of young people and elevates important youth issues by engaging with elected officials, corporations, the media, educators and the broader public. Please describe your vision for America's youth and which significant challenge you would address as National Youth of the Year. Please describe this challenge in detail, as well as the experiences that helped you develop your perspective about it. In what ways can Clubs help other youth who are facing this challenge? Complete your essay by briefly presenting one clear solution to address the challenge.

Essay 3: My Personal Brand

In the 21st century, each of us has a brand, just like a company or a product. We stand for something in the minds and hearts of our friends, teachers, mentors, family members and associates. As the National Youth of the Year, your personal brand will become associated with Boys & Girls Clubs of America's brand. Which qualities define your personal brand? Which three adjectives describe your personal brand, and why? What do you stand for in the hearts and minds of those who know you? What are your goals and purpose in life? How would being the National Youth of the Year help you build your personal brand?

The National Youth of the Year is primarily selected on the basis of the candidate's leadership experiences and potential; character; commitment to community service; standards of academic achievement; and commitment to leading a long-term healthy lifestyle. The purpose of these letters of recommendation is to clarify how the candidate exemplifies the qualities of a National Youth of the Year in each of the categories. Caring adults who can directly comment on the candidate's experiences and abilities in each area should be asked to write recommendations. Please include contact information for each letter writer.

RECOMMENDATION AREAS

Recommendation 1: Leadership, Character and Service
(pg 16)

Recommendation 2: Academic Excellence
(pg 17)

Recommendation 3: Healthy Lifestyles
(pg 18)

LEADERSHIP, CHARACTER AND SERVICE RECOMMENDATION 2016

This letter should be written by a Club professional. Please ask letter writer to place letter on Club/Organization letterhead and include title and e-mail address.

Please discuss the candidate's suitability to hold the title of National Youth of the Year, with a particular emphasis on his/her commitment to leadership, character and community service. Address the candidate's values, interests, goals, ambitions and experiences as a leader and team member within the Club community. You are encouraged to include Club, family, school, service and other leadership experiences as examples to highlight the candidate's potential for future leadership success.

This letter should be written by a teacher or school administrator. Please ask the letter writer to place on official letterhead, as appropriate, and to please include a title as well as a school address.

Please discuss the candidate's suitability to hold the title of National Youth of the Year, with a particular emphasis on the candidate's academic performance, intellectual capabilities and prospects for future academic success. Discuss the candidate's academic achievement levels, analytical skills, and ability to overcome academic challenges, as well as related obstacles that may have impacted his/her overall academic achievement. It is appropriate to discuss the candidate's academic goals and the levels of grit and resilience that he/she applies in pursuit of strong academic performance. Please include specific examples of how he/she has worked to overcome academic obstacles and pursue a high level of academic excellence.

This letter should be written by a non-family-member adult who can speak to the candidate's commitment to living and promoting healthy lifestyles. Please ask the letter writer to specify their relationship to the candidate and to include a title as well as an e-mail address.

As National Youth of the Year are selected for their potential over a lifetime, one important criterion is their ability to meet the physical fitness demands required by an active lifestyle. Satisfying this standard does not require evidence of achievement in organized sports, but all applicants should be able to demonstrate that they lead a healthy lifestyle that will enable him/her to make an effective contribution to the world around them and serve as an ambassador who promotes this priority outcome to other youth.

Please discuss the candidate's suitability to hold the title of National Youth of the Year, with a particular emphasis on his/her commitment to physical fitness, nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle. This can include participation in sports, fitness and nutrition-related experiences, as well as avoidance of alcohol and drug consumption, abstinence, peer education in these areas, or other characteristics associated with building lifelong healthy habits.