



2016 Youth of the Year Finalists

2016 NJ Youth of the Year – Alexia L. – Age 17, Boys & Girls Club of Vineland



“Discovering the potential within myself and learning the steps I needed to take to apply it to my interests and passions would have not happened without my involvement in the Boys & Girls Club.”

Alexia is a senior at Oakcrest High School where she is Captain of the dance team. She has been a Club member for 3 years. Alexia is the President of the Keystone Club and the creator of You Can Too!, a self-esteem awareness initiative. Alexia is also a participant in Career Launch, Youth for Change and Smart Girls. Her additional community service activities include 21 Down Buddy walk to bring awareness to children with Down syndrome. Alexia plans to attend Hampton University this fall where she will major in Political Science.

Career Aspiration: Lawyer

2016 NJ Military Youth of the Year – Arianna S. – Age 15, Dix Youth Center



“My Club taught me that a little bit of fear is NOT a sign of weakness! It is a tool that can be used to help me not to become too comfortable with my life as a military teen. I am not afraid to give 100% as the Ambassador for our military youths.”

Arianna is a freshman at Northern Burlington County Regional High School where she participates in Spring Track and freshman girls basketball. She has been a Club member for 3 years. She is an active member of Career Launch, Keystone Club and Money Matters programs. Her community service activities include World Wide Day of Play, Chalk the Walk and Black History Month celebration. Arianna plans to attend the Air Force Academy.

Career Aspiration: Fighter Pilot or Intelligence Officer

Rickeya W. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City

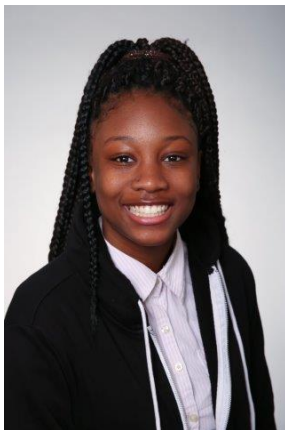


“At the Club, I learned that it’s not what you have that matters, what matters are the choices you make in life.”

Rickeya is a senior at Atlantic City High School where she is the Vice President of her class. She has been a Club member for 8 years and is a member of the Club’s Champions of Youth program. Rickeya has also participated in the Junior Staff program as a STEM Teacher Assistant. She earned a Miniversity Certificate from Stockton University. Rickeya’s community service initiatives include a service learning project bringing awareness to gun safety and collecting business clothes for a battered women’s shelter. Rickeya will attend Rutgers University this fall where she plans to major in English and minor in Social Work.

Career Aspiration: Lawyer

Janerea L. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Club of Camden County



“The Club has helped me define what it is to become a leader.”

Janerea is a senior at Camden County Technical School. She has been a Club member for 2 years and has participated in Career Launch, Keystone and Smart Moves programs. She is the head coach for her Club’s cheerleading program. Her community service activities include the MLK Day of Service project and having worked 75 hours at a local nursing home. Janerea will attend Bloomfield College this fall to study Nursing.

Career Aspiration: Nursing

Alexis S. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Club of Clifton



“Being the Youth of the Year isn’t just a title - it’s a responsibility. You are the role model to the children at the Club. You are the person they look up to when they feel like life is not going their way. The Youth of the Year helps teach children to overcome obstacles and use their struggles as fuel to achieve their goals.”

Alexis is a senior at Passaic County Technical Institute. She is a member of the United Puerto Rican Council, Keystone Club and the girls softball team. She has been a member of the Club for 14 years. Her community service activities include volunteering at the local animal shelter, participating in an AT&T PSA and organizing toy and food drives. Alexis will attend Kean University this fall to study Psychology.

Career Aspiration: Child Psychologist

Malachi D. – Age 16, Boys & Girls Club of Garfield



“In order to positively affect one’s future, you have to first plant the seed, then take affirmative action.”

Malachi is a sophomore at Garfield High School where he maintains a 3.6 GPA. He has been a member of the Club for 11 years. Malachi was honored with the Buddy of the Year award from the Club and Humanitarian of the Year award from the city of Garfield. Malachi helps run the Torch Club and tutors youth at his Club. His community service activities include participating in cleanup efforts in Paterson and at the Jersey Shore after a natural disaster. He plans to study Business.

Career Aspiration: Entrepreneur

Dionne L. – Age 16, Boys & Girls Clubs of Gloucester County



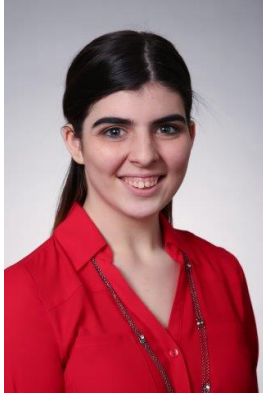
“I love my Boys & Girls Club. The Club is my second family and support system. When I am at the Club I can be myself without judgement. The Club has taught me how to grow into the woman I am supposed to be. I don’t know where I would be without the Club.”

Dionne is a sophomore at Glassboro High School where she has been on the Honor Roll. She has been an active member of the Boys & Girls Clubs for 11 years, 6 of which were at the Gloucester Club. Dionne is the Vice President of the Keystone Club and the Former President of the Torch Club. Dionne knows sign language and is an usher at her church. Her community

service initiatives include feeding the homeless and raising money to combat various illnesses.

Career Aspiration: Neonatologist

Megan P. – Age 16, Boys & Girls Club of Hawthorne



“The Club gave me a chance to be who I wanted to be while learning how to be a true leader.”

Megan is a junior at Passaic County Technical Institute where she is a class representative and cheerleader. She has been a member of the Club for 13 years. Megan is the Secretary of the Torch Club and has held various positions in the Keystone Club. Megan has been honored three years in a row with the Gold Presidential Volunteer Service award and was Keystone of the Year. Her community service activities include the Autism Walk, Avon Breast Cancer Walk and Breakfast with Santa.

Career Aspiration: High School Math Teacher

Bintia S. – Age 17, Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County



“Being a Club member not only gave me the opportunity to make new friends and get the help I needed to improve my English, but also taught me that I have a voice in our community and that I should use it to impact youth.”

Bintia is a senior at James J. Ferris High School where she maintains a 3.8 GPA. She is a member of the Varsity tennis team, Aspira Club, National Honor Society and Vice President of the Student Council. She has been a Club member for 3 years. She has served as the Keystone Griffins Secretary, was a Moderator for Our Lives Matter Youth Town Hall, attended the Diplomas 2 Degrees Conference and the National Keystone Conference. Her community service activities include Jersey City Medical Center charity runs and the American Heart Association Walk. Bintia will attend Rutgers – New Brunswick this fall and plans to major in Pre-Med.

Career Aspiration: Neurosurgeon

Giannina G. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Clubs of Lodi/Hackensack



“The Lodi/Hackensack Club has served as a support system and safe haven during stressful times. The Club has also given me the opportunity to volunteer to impact others.”

Giannina is a senior at Academies at Englewood where she maintains a 3.7 GPA. She is the President of the National Honor Society, Captain of the Varsity volleyball team and Co-founder and President of the Peer Mentoring program. She has been a Club member for 3 years, is President of the Keystone Club, and a Smart Girls participant. Her community service initiatives include Walk to Defeat ALS and Summer Faith Formation. Giannina will attend George Washington University this fall and plans to study Biology.

Career Aspiration: Lawyer

Bryana T. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County



“The Club has given me a second family. The Club has taught me to break out of my shell and I have become more comfortable talking to people.”

Bryana is a senior at West Windsor High School South. She has been a Club member for 7 years and is the Communications Chair and Vice President of the Keystone Club. She is a student in the Job Ready program, a member of the Young Life Church Group and a member of the Sandyhook Women’s Choir. Bryana was honored with the Junior Counselor award and Striving for Excellence award. She will attend Johnson & Wales University this fall to study Business and Culinary Arts.

Career Aspiration: Chef/Teacher

Tiffany N. – Age 19, Boys & Girls Club of Newark



“Society has taught our youth, and adults, that some beliefs don’t matter. However, this voiceless society is in danger, and we must say what’s on our minds in order to salvage what is left for the common good.”

Tiffany is a senior at Arts High School where she maintains a 4.2 GPA. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Varsity volleyball team and Captain of the Varsity softball team. Tiffany has been an active Club member for 12 years. She participated in the Smart Moves program and is a member of the swim team and basketball team. Her community service activities include building a playground at the Club and participating in a toy drive. She was honored with a Scholar Athlete award at her high school. She will be

attending Wake Forest University this fall to study Liberal Arts.

Career Aspiration: Non-profit Executive

Kayla C. – Age 18, The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Newark Ironbound

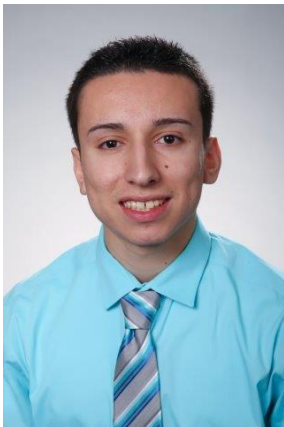


“At my Boys & Girls Club I am able to express myself, to share my thoughts and ideas with others who truly care. The Club has offered to be my home, my playground and my future. The place where everyone is family.”

Kayla is a senior at Bloomfield High School where she maintains a 3.4 GPA. She is a member of the Future Business Leaders of America and Girls Learn International programs. Kayla has been a Club member for 4 years. She is the Vice President of the Keystone Club and President of Smart Girls. Her community service activities include Girls Scouts and Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services. Kayla was honored with the Salvation Army Corps Cadets Graduate award. She will be attending Rutgers – Newark this fall to study Public Administration.

Career Aspiration: Non-profit Executive

Brian C. – Age 18, Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest New Jersey



“The Boys & Girls Club is a second home to me and I would not change it for the world.”

Brian is a senior at Manchester Regional High School where he maintains a 4.0 GPA. He is a peer leader and a member of the Make a Difference Club and National Honor Society. Brian has been a member of the Club for 6 years and is a member of the Keystone Club and an afterschool and summer camp counselor. His community service initiatives include volunteering at St. Joseph’s of Wayne Medical Center and St. Paul’s Roman Catholic Church. Brian intends to major in Biology.

Career Aspiration: Physician Assistant

Genesis G. – Age 16, Boys & Girls Club of Paterson & Passaic



“I feel the Boys & Girls Club has pushed me to go beyond my anxiety so I can reach my full potential. They taught me to never let my fear make my decisions.”

Genesis is a junior at the Academy of Health Science. She is a member of the dance and volleyball teams. Genesis has been an active Club member for 10 years. She received the Heroes of the Heart award. She is a member of the Torch Club, Money Matters, Career Launch, Healthy Habits and Job Ready programs. Her community service activities include volunteering at her Club and assisting the elderly at a group home. Genesis plans to study medicine.

Career Aspiration: Medicine

Ronald B. – Age 16, Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County



“My experiences at the Club kept me away from negative influences and helped shape me into the young man I am today.”

Ronald is a senior at Union High School. He has been a member of the Club for 10 years. Ronald is a member of the Keystone Club, Torch Club, Money Matters, Career Launch and the afterschool program. His community service activities include serving at a soup kitchen and participating in clothing drives. He was honored with a Keystone award. Ronald was accepted to an accelerated degree program at Rowan University.

Career Aspiration: Law Enforcement or Lawyer

Quintin S. – Age 18, Earle Navy Youth Center



“The Club has given me many opportunities to grow and succeed.”

Quintin is a senior at Monmouth Regional High School. He has been an active Club member for 12 years. Quintin was honored as the Regional Winner for the Digital Arts Festival in the Video/Film and Graphic Arts competition. Quintin is the President of the Keystone Club and a participant in Career Launch, Money Matters, Job Ready, and Torch Club. His community service activities include the One Warm Coat Drive and Relay for Life.

Career Aspiration: Air Force

Michael L. – Age 14, McGuire Youth Center



“The Club taught me that if you give up, you’ll never get anywhere in life.”

Michael is an 8th grade student at Burlington County Regional Middle School where he is a member of Math Counts and the International Club. He has been an active Club member for 9 years. Michael is the Vice President of the Keystone Club and participates in Passport to Manhood, Money Matters, and Healthy Habits at the Military Club. His community service activities include World Wide Day of Play, Game Night and Month of the Military Child.

Career Aspiration: Businessman or Professional NBA Player