



EXCEPTIONAL TEEN RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS HONOR; NAMED NEW JERSEY MILITARY YOUTH OF THE YEAR BY BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

Kuanyah Norris set to receive college scholarship and vie for regional title this month

Clifton, NJ, June 2017 – Hailing from Fort Dix Youth Center, Kuanyah Norris has been named the New Jersey State Military Youth of the Year by Boys & Girls Clubs of America for her leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle. The Youth of the Year title is a prestigious honor bestowed upon an exemplary young person in recognition of leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle. Now in its 70th year, the program honors our nation's most awe-inspiring young people on their path to great futures and encourages all kids to lead, succeed and inspire. As the new teen representative and one of 3 military youth finalists competing for the honor, Kuanyah will represent all members of Boys & Girls Clubs-affiliated youth centers in New Jersey and will receive a \$5,000 college scholarship.

Kuanyah is a freshman at Northern Burlington Regional High School where she has received the Most Likely to Succeed Award, Perfect Attendance Award and has been recognized on the honor roll. She is involved in the social club, basketball and track & field. Kuanyah has been a Club member for three years and is the vice president of the Keystone Club, a teen group dedicated to leadership and community service. Kuanyah is also a member of Career Launch, diplomas2Degrees, Money Matters among many other Club programs. Kuanyah's community service initiatives include participating in MLK Day of Service and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst Installation Children's Christmas Party. She hopes to attend Stanford University or Spellman College to study journalism. Her career aspiration is to be a news commentator.

"Kuanyah and all Youth of the Year nominees are living proof that Boys & Girls Clubs across the country are inspiring and enabling young people to achieve great futures," said Jim Clark, president and CEO, BGCA. "Being named Youth of the Year is a lifelong honor. As the New Jersey Military Youth of the Year, Kuanyah will serve as a spokesperson for our young people, sharing her inspiring story and leading the way to transform communities for the better."

Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Youth of the Year recognition program is presented by Disney, who has supported the youth advocacy organization for more than 50 years, empowering young people to reach their full potential and providing youth with access to the tools they need to build the great

futures they imagine. Toyota, the Signature Sponsor of Youth of the Year, is dedicated to inspiring the next generations of engineers, thinkers and leaders who will help drive the American economy. Additional support is provided by University of Phoenix, a committed partner who has worked with Boys & Girls Clubs of America on many Academic Success initiatives, and the Taco Bell Foundation, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier partner for teen empowerment.

This month, Kuanyah will join other state military winners to vie for the Northeast military regional title. If named the regional winner, she will be awarded an additional \$10,000 college scholarship, renewable for four years up to \$40,000. Six youth will advance to Washington, D.C. in September 2017 to compete for the title of Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Youth of the Year. The National Youth of the Year will receive an additional scholarship of \$25,000, renewable for four years up to \$100,000 and will have the opportunity to meet with the President of the United States in the White House.

For more information about the Youth of the Year program, visit www.youthoftheyear.org.

About Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is an alliance of 23 Boys & Girls Club organizations serving over 70,000 youth ages 5-18 throughout the Garden State. Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is a collaborative effort representing all 23 Clubs with the purpose of building local Club capacity; raising public awareness; and securing resources and financial support to increase the impact and reach of local Clubs. Learn more at www.bgcnj.org

About Boys & Girls Clubs of America

For more than 150 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (<http://www.GreatFutures.org>) has enabled young people most in need to achieve great futures as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Today, more than 4,200 Clubs serve nearly 4 million young people annually through Club membership and community outreach. Clubs are located in cities, towns, public housing and on Native lands throughout the country, and serve military families in BGCA-affiliated Youth Centers on U.S. military installations worldwide. They provide a safe place, caring adult mentors, fun, friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours. Priority programs emphasize academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. In a Harris Survey of alumni, 54 percent said the Club saved their lives. National headquarters are located in Atlanta. Learn more at <http://www.bgca.org/facebook> and <http://bgca.org/twitter>.

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Contact: Terese Kelly Greer, Rosica Communications, terese@rosica.com, 201-843-5600