



## **EXCEPTIONAL *New Jersey* TEEN NAMED ‘MILITARY YOUTH OF THE YEAR’**

*Michael Lewis to Now Vie for Northeast Region Title and Scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs of America*

Clifton, NJ, August 6, 2020 – Michael Lewis has been named the Youth of the Year by Boys & Girls Clubs of America. 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 73<sup>rd</sup> year, the Youth of the Year program honors our nation’s most awe-inspiring young people on their path to great futures. Michael will represent all members of Boys & Girls Clubs-affiliated Youth Centers in New Jersey. He will receive a \$6,000 college scholarship -- \$3,500 from Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey and \$2,500 from Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Michael will go on to contend for the regional Youth of the Year and ultimately the national title.

Michael has been a member of the McGuire Youth Center for 13 years since he was in first grade. He participated in many Club programs including Money Matters and Passport to Manhood. In addition, Michael held positions for his Club’s teen group dedicated to leadership and community service serving as Keystone Club President and Vice President. Other community service activities include his work with World Wide Day of Play, Olympic Day, Month of the Military Child, and weekly activities on the base working with younger youth. Michael has received a number of honors including The National Society of High School Scholars, Kitty Hawk Air Society, JROTC Tusekegee Airmen Award, and the JROTC Celebrate Freedom Foundation Award. Michael recently graduated from North Burlington High School and will be attending University of Alabama Huntsville this Fall, majoring in Astrophysics. His career aspiration is to work at NASA.

“We are incredibly proud of Michael, and all the Youth of the Year nominees,” said Jim Clark, president and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of America. “Being named Youth of the Year is a lifelong honor. As the New Jersey Military Youth of the Year, Michael will serve as a spokesperson for young people across the state who face the many unique challenges associated with military life.”

Founded in 1947 as Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s premier youth recognition program, Youth of the Year recognizes outstanding contributions to a member’s family, school, community and

Boys & Girls Club. The Youth of the Year program is supported by Toyota. As a Signature Sponsor of Youth of the Year, Toyota is committed to partnering with Boys & Girls Clubs of America to ensure local Clubs provide life-enhancing opportunities for kids and teens to explore, develop and apply the essential skills they need to be successful in life and work. Youth of the Year representatives are the workforce leaders, innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow.

Michael will compete for title of Northeast Region Military Youth of the Year and an additional \$20,000 college scholarship. Six finalists will advance this September, to compete for the title of National Military Youth of the Year. The final stage of the journey, National Youth of the Year, presents the opportunity to receive an additional scholarship of \$50,000.

For more information about the Youth of the Year program, visit [www.youthoftheyear.org](http://www.youthoftheyear.org).

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey**

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is an alliance of 22 Boys & Girls Club organizations serving nearly 70,000 youth ages 5-18 throughout the Garden State. Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is a collaborative effort representing all 22 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 NJ Clubs. Learn more at [www.bgcnj.org](http://www.bgcnj.org)

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of America**

For more than 150 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (<http://www.bgca.org>) has enabled young people most in need to achieve great futures as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Today 4,600 Clubs serve 4.7 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 [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Contact: Susan Haspel, [shaspel@bgcnj.org](mailto:shaspel@bgcnj.org), 973-773-0966, x151