



## **EXCEPTIONAL NEW JERSEY TEEN RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS HONOR; NAMED 2023 NEW JERSEY “MILITARY YOUTH OF THE YEAR”**

### ***Aidan Long Receives \$6,000 College Scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey and Boys & Girls Clubs of America – To Vie For Regional Title in June***

Clifton, NJ, May 11, 2023 – Aidan from the Fort Dix Youth Center has been named the 2023 New Jersey Military Youth of the Year by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. 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 living a healthy lifestyle. Now in its 76th year, the program honors our nation’s most awe-inspiring young people on their path to great futures. As the 2023 New Jersey Military Youth of the Year, Aidan will serve as an ambassador for all teens throughout the state. He will receive a \$6,000 college scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey and Boys & Girls Clubs of America and will go on to contend for the regional Youth of the Year and ultimately the national title.

Long has been an outstanding Club member of the Fort Dix Youth Center for five years. He has participated in many Club programs that have made a big impact on him including serving as Keystone President for a teen group dedicated to leadership and community service and BGCA/WWE Anti-Bullying Ambassador. Additionally, Long participated in the Passport to Manhood program that reinforces character, leadership and positive behavior as well as the importance of giving back to the community. He believes that his Military Club experience gave him a strong sense of belonging and inspired him to be an advocate for youth. Long also enjoys mentoring young people at the Youth Center.

Long attends North Burlington Regional High School where he maintains a strong GPA and is on the Honor Roll. Aidan is an accomplished member of the cross country and track teams at his high school, receiving numerous awards including most improved player. His long-term goal after college is to compete in the Olympics. His career aspiration is to be a Track Coach or Criminal Profiler.

“We are incredibly proud of Aidan and all the Youth of the Year nominees,” said Susan Haspel, State Director of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey. “Being named Youth of the Year is a lifelong honor. As the New Jersey Military Youth of the Year, Aidan will serve

as a spokesperson for kids and teens 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 and Mondelēz. As the 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. As the Lead Sponsor of Youth of the Year, Mondelēz International, will engage with local Clubs year-round to help foster a new generation of leaders prepared to live in and lead a diverse global economy. Youth of the Year representatives are the workforce leaders, innovators, and problem-solvers of tomorrow.

On June 21, Aidan will vie for the title of Northeast Military Youth of the Year and an additional \$20,000 college scholarship. Each region’s military Youth of the Year will advance to the National Military Youth of the Year event for an additional \$20,000 scholarship. The National Military Youth of the Year will then advance to the final stage of the journey, National Youth of the Year, which presents the opportunity to receive an additional scholarship of \$50,000 and a brand-new Toyota Corolla.

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 more than 40,000 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 about Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey at [www.bgcnj.org](http://www.bgcnj.org).

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

For 160 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America ([BGCA.org](http://BGCA.org)) has provided a safe place for kids and teens to learn and grow. Clubs offer caring adult mentors, fun and friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours. Boys & Girls Clubs programming promotes academic success, good character and leadership, and healthy lifestyles. More than 4,900 Clubs serve over 4.3 million young people 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. National headquarters are located in Atlanta. Learn more about Boys & Girls Clubs of America on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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