



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF YORK COUNTY

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EXCEPTIONAL YORK COUNTY TEEN WINS YOUTH OF THE YEAR HONOR FOR BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF YORK COUNTY

Sarah Tucker, Catawba Teen Center, to Now Vie for State Title and Scholarship

York County, SC – April 5, 2016 – Selected among several local outstanding youth, **Sarah Tucker**, will compete against other Boys & Girls Club members for the South Carolina Youth of the Year title and a \$5,000 college scholarship from Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). The Youth of the Year 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 Youth of the Year for Boys & Girls Clubs of York County, 11th grade Sarah is a true example of an extraordinary young woman recognized by BGCA for her leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle.

Catawba Chief Bill Harris writes that “during her time at the Club, Sarah has created a plan for her future and enhanced her life skills while also building character and integrity.”

Sarah is a student at Rock Hill High School and has been attending the Catawba Teen Center since its inception. She is proud to represent the Club as its first Youth of the Year winner and the first South Carolina Native American Club member to receive this top Boys & Girls Club honor. Sarah described herself as shy and unmotivated prior to joining the Boys & Girls Club. Since becoming a member, she has not only become a self-proclaimed “social butterfly” but, with the help of positive adult role models like Club staff Denise Gilbert and Rachel McDaniel, she has gained social skills and confidence that she previously lacked. She has also improved academically with the help of onsite tutors and even realized her desire to one day become a music educator. While Sarah says that she has several fond memories from her time as a Club member thus far, one of her favorites was the opportunity to travel with her Club and Catawba Chief Bill Harris to meet President Obama. Sarah enjoys spending her time giving back to others through opportunities at the Club to volunteer including organizing food pantries at Pilgrim’s Inn and painting rocking chairs for the Catawba seniors. Sarah’s orchestra director, Jeremy Shaw, shares that she is



“quick to help others when needed, and can often be found assisting them with homework or practice during lunch or after school in the orchestra room.”

While she has discovered her passions and built confidence in herself, she has also enjoyed learning more about her heritage and traditions of the Catawba Indians. Sarah shares that prior to becoming a Club member, “she did not know who her chief was.” Now, she shares that spending time with the Chief at the Club has allowed her to grow even closer to her culture and deepen her appreciation of her heritage.

“Sarah is a wonderful example to the other youth at the Club and throughout the community” says Chief Bill Harris.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s National Youth of the Year recognition program is presented by Disney, who has supported BGCA 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 committed to helping improve the quality of life in our communities, and has demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring youth have access to a quality education. Additional support is provided by University of Phoenix, a national education partner that has joined with BGCA to impact academic success among youth across the country, and the Taco Bell Foundation, BGCA’s premier partner for teen empowerment.

If Sarah wins at the state competition, she will compete for the title of Southeast Region Youth of the Year and an additional \$10,000 college scholarship, renewable for four years up to \$40,000. Five regional winners will advance to Washington, D.C., in September 2016, to compete for the title of BGCA’s National Youth of the Year. The National Youth of the Year will receive an additional scholarship of \$25,000, renewable each year up to \$100,000 and will have the opportunity to meet with the President of the United States in the White House.

Sarah will officially be presented as the Boys & Girls Clubs of York County’s 2016 Youth of the Year winner along with Chief Bill Harris at the meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Rock Hill on Thursday, April 7th beginning at 12:30 pm. Members of the media are invited to attend to share in this very special moment for our Clubs, the Catawba Nation, and most importantly, for Sarah.

For more information about the Youth of the Year program, visit <http://www.youthoftheyear.org>.

About [BGC Organization]

Since 1992, Boys & Girls Clubs of York County has maintained its mission to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. Serving over 750 members last year, Boys & Girls Clubs of York County operates 5 Clubs in Clover, Catawba, Rock Hill and Fort Mill including. For additional information regarding the clubs and services, visit <http://www.bgcyc.org>.

About Boys & Girls Clubs of America

For more than 100 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 4,100 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, 57 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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