Youth of the Year

Since 1947, Youth of the Year has been Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s premier recognition program, celebrating the extraordinary achievements of Club members. The journey begins locally and progresses to the state, regional and national levels. To achieve the title of Youth of the Year on any level, Club members must embody the values of leadership and service, academic excellence, and healthy lifestyles.

Each year BGCAA selects 6 contestants to participate in the local level Youth of the Year. In the last 3 years, 12 of the 18 contestants have been part of the Junior Staff Career Development Program. In 2015, Desmond Beggarly who was part of the JSCDP, not only won at the local level but was also named the Maryland state Youth of the Year Winner.

“I have always been one to leave a smile on the face of those I found sad, to give advice to someone I found lost, and to brave the path less traveled.”

Junior Staff Career Development Program
Preparing for tomorrow by making a difference today

From January 2014 through December 2016, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County’s (BGCAA) Junior Staff Career Development Program, supported by a grant from the Deerbrook Charitable Trust, has employed over 90 youth. This initiative has provided youth with opportunities to actively participate in a comprehensive career development program consisting of leadership and service activities.

As a result of taking part in the program, members: developed and strengthened leadership skills; are seen as positive role models and respected by peers, family, school personnel, community and Club staff; are introduced to a possible career in Boys & Girls Club work and other human services professions; assist staff in “making a difference” in the lives of youth; exhibit a sense of pride in their responsibilities and are perceived as contributors. Junior Staff learn how to set goals and maintain direction; receive exposure to a variety of areas in the Clubs as well as in the community; learn important decision-making skills to prepare and plan their future; develop communication skills; learn to build resumes, interview skills, and career exploration. The program also builds the knowledge and abilities teens need for success in the future.
Great Futures Start Here

An integral component of the JSCP is prepare all participants for a Great Future. For many, this is attending a college or university, others it is trade school and for some it is a commitment to the United States Armed Forces. The JSCDP assists participants by offering college tours, resume writing workshops, hosting career development seminars, etc. From 2014 – present, participants in the JSCP have:

2014
8 Graduating Seniors
14 Currently Enrolled in College
0 Collegiate with Degrees
4 Academic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
0 Athletic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
0 Academic and Athletic Scholarship to a 4-year College and/or University

2015
10 Graduating Seniors
12 Currently Enrolled in College
0 Collegiate with Degrees
3 Academic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
1 Athletic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
0 Academic and Athletic Scholarship to a 4-year College and/or University

2016
17 Graduating Seniors
32 Currently Enrolled in College
0 Collegiate with Degrees
4 Academic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
1 Athletic Scholarships to 4 year Colleges and/or Universities
1 Academic and Athletic Scholarship to a 4-year College and/or University

workplace – preparing them for their first jobs and for future careers. Through a variety of engaging activities, teens learn essential workplace skills, active listening, goal setting, appropriate work behaviors, brainstorming, collaboration/teamwork, work ethic, giving and receiving dealing with work challenges.

Typically, participation in the Junior Staff Career Development Program leads to improved attendance and better grades in school, improved work habits, improved self-image and greater self-confidence.

Over the last three years the average Grade Point Average of the participants in the Junior Staff Career Development Program (G.P.A) was:

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<th>Year</th>
<th>GPA</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 2014</td>
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Making an Impact

Taylor Tilghman – Junior Staff, Freetown Village Club

Taylor has been a crucial member of the Junior Staff Career Development Program. After hearing about the program from a fellow JSCDP member, Taylor applied and began working at the Freetown Village Club when she was a junior in high school over five years. Taylor had always wanted to work with kids and felt working at the Boys & Girls Club would be a perfect fit. Once she became a part of the JSCP, she was inspired to make a career out of her passion and upon graduating high school enrolled in Anne Arundel Community College where she is working on her degree in early childhood Education. Taylor said it was her experience working at the Boys & Girls Club which made her want to be a teacher.

Taylor has constantly pushed herself to a level of excellence and is currently an Elite Junior Staff. To become an Elite Junior Staff, you must be recommended by your Club Director, maintain a 3.0 G.P.A and exemplify advanced levels of leadership, mentorship, and assistance within the Club. Taylor facilitates
programs such as Smart Girls, Power Hour and Summer Brain Gain at the Freetown Village Club.

Taylor stated her participation in the Junior Staff Career Development Program helped her prepare for a career, understand time management, communication skills and professionalism. It was the Junior Staff program that inspired her to pursue higher education and reach for her dream of being a Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten or 1st grade teacher.

**Making an Impact**  
**Arthur Slade – Junior Staff, Bywater Club**

Arthur has been a member and active in Boys & Girls Club activities since third grade. Arthur credits the Boys & Girls with turning from a shy kid into a confident leader with a bright future. He calls the Club his second home and has progressed from Club member to volunteer to Junior Staff where he has been part of the Junior Staff Career Development Program since his sophomore year in high school. He enjoys serving as a role model for young club members and helping with the day-to-day operations of the Club. Inspired by his own love of art, Arthur created a program called “Art with Arthur.” At 4:30 p.m., he sets up for the one-hour program he developed and leads. Materials are laid out for the children to practice creating abstract scenes, landscapes, portraits, still life’s or cartoons. At the end of the session, all the art is hung on the walls for the kids to compare and learn.

The past three years, the Boys & Girls Club has nominated Arthur for the Youth of the Year Award, one of six local teens to be honored. Matt Kountz, director of the Bywater Boys & Girls Club says Arthur is a leader who helps define the club. "Arthur is a strong male role model for the Boys & Girls club members to look up to," Kountz said. "He is a good student who takes his school work and job seriously."

Currently ranked, academically, in the top 30 percent of his class, he is a member of the National Honor Society and National Art Honor Society, and is a representative of the Student Government Association. He started senior year with all 26 credits needed for graduation, but he’s spending his final year at Annapolis High gaining additional AP credits, which count toward college credits, and sharpening his technical, artistic and leadership skills. The 17-year old Annapolis resident tentatively plans to major in a computer technology program to train for a technology career. He hopes to minor in graphic design. Arthur was recently selected by The Capital Gazette as a local Teen of the Week.

**Moving Towards a Better Future**  
**Measuring the Success of a Comprehensive Career Development Program for Youth**

For young people who have access to education and career preparation, the long-term benefits are clear.

BGCAA is committed to measuring the outcomes of the JSCDP by tracking pre/post surveys every year focusing on Career Exploration and Planning, Job-Search Strategies (Work-based Learning Experiences) and Skills Development (Essential Workplace Skills). The pre-test and post-test survey tools seek to measure changes in participants over time. Test questions focus on participants’ attitudes, knowledge and skills in the following content areas related to launching a career: defining a vision for the future, exploring career options, gaining work experience while in the program, building job-readiness skills, having a positive work experience, and developing a short- and long-term plan for their career.

Participants are asked to rate a series of statements on a three-point scale (agree, disagree, not sure) or to rate how frequently they have done a specific behavior on a four-point scale (never, one or two times, three or four times, five or more times). Participants complete the pre-test survey at the beginning of the year and complete the post-test survey at the end. Using a pre-test/post-test design is an efficient and effective way to measure the extent to which participants have achieved the desired outcomes. The test data informs BGCAA of what aspects of the program are most effective, for whom, and ways in which the program can be improved.

Data collected from pre-test and post-test surveys require statistical analysis. Questions in the surveys are organized into categories. Each category contains items that measure a specific topic or desired outcome for the program. With the exception of the background section, BGCAA can compute an average score for each category for all youth.

**QUESTION #1** measures members’ current plans for pursuing higher education.

**QUESTION #2** measures members’ readiness for the career process.

**QUESTION #3** measures members’ attitudes about the benefits of career planning.

**QUESTION #4** measures members’ behaviors related to preparation for a career.

**QUESTION #5** measures members’ knowledge of the preparation for a career.

**Funding the Investment**

The Deerbrook Charitable Trust generously invests in the future of youth by funding this pivotal program. This funding investment not only pays the participants in the program an hourly wage during the academic school year, it allows participants as well as 10 returning College students to work during the crucial summer months. All Junior staff attend a week long training where they are certified in First Aid and CPR, learn structured evidence based Summer learning programs implemented during summer camp, and reporting requirements as an employee of a Maryland licensed summer camp. Funding of the program also covers training & workshops, College Tours and career presentations as well as supplies such as staff shirts and training manuals.