

Exceptional Teens Compete for Youth of the Year Honors!

The New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is excited to announce that SEFCU, one of the largest credit unions in New York State, has agreed to be the 2014 Presenting Sponsor of the 2014 New York State Youth of the Year Program.

On May 19, fifty-one (51) exceptional teenagers representing more than 179,000 children who regularly attend New York Boys & Girls Clubs will come to the State Capitol and compete for Boys & Girls Club of America's State Youth of the Year title. Being named Youth of the Year is the highest honor a Boys & Girls Club member can receive. As Boys & Girls Clubs of America's premier youth recognition program, the Youth of the Year title recognizes outstanding contributions to a member's family, school, community and Boys & Girls Club, as well as personal challenges and obstacles overcome.

SEFCU has generously committed \$20,000 in scholarships to support the educational aspirations of Youth of the Year program participants. Thanks to SEFCU and national Youth of the Year sponsor Tupperware, the state and military Club winners will be awarded scholarships to help them pursue their educational goals.

The Youth of the Year program is a mainstay of the Boys & Girls Club experience, and gives young people a voice and a path to showcase their personal development. The program provides young people with the opportunity to show their Club, their state, their region and the entire United States that they have developed into model citizens. Through essays and speeches, the Youth of the Year candidates illustrate how they have turned their aspirations into actions and overcome personal obstacles to achieve success.

Michael Castellana, SEFCU President and CEO, has served on the judges' panel in previous years and said, "I am amazed at the resiliency and determination that the finalists have shown in their young lives. SEFCU is proud to help them prepare to start the next leg of their journey by providing scholarships for these exceptional young adults."

The program helps young people focus on the specific areas of personal development that they need to be successful Youth of the Year candidates as well as successful and productive adults. Specifically, the Youth of the Year program benefits Club members by helping them:

- develop healthy attitudes toward home, community, school and the Club;
- recognize the importance of patriotism and good character, and demonstrate them in all aspects of their daily lives;
- strengthen their moral values;
- build positive self-concepts;
- achieve personal growth;
- improve writing, listening and speaking skills;
- identify with positive role models; and
- develop leadership skills.

Each local Boys & Girls Club selects a Youth of the Year, between the ages of 14-18, to represent his/her organization in the state competition.