

Teen named Youth of the Year for Carlisle Barracks Boys & Girls Club

Meriah Swope, Carlisle Barracks Boys & Girls Club

Teen wins Youth of the Year honor for Carlisle Barracks Boys & Girls Club



Selected among several local outstanding youths, William Hammer will compete against other Boys & Girls Club members for the Pennsylvania Military 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 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 the Carlisle Barracks Boys & Girls Club, 16-year old William Hammer is a true example of an extraordinary young man recognized by BGCA for his leadership, service, academic excellence and dedication to live a healthy lifestyle.

“Will is a natural born leader and is always willing to help out others when he can. He is a tremendous asset to the club!” said Meriah Swope, Lead Child & Youth Program Assistant at McConnell Youth Center

“We are very proud of the young man Will is becoming. He has always been a kid full of compassion and laughter. His engaging personality and concern for others has naturally grown into solid leadership skills amongst his peers. Will is always ready with a joke, a laugh and a high five for a job well done.” said parents, Col. Brian and Jennifer Hammer

As a leader Will has the confidence to handle himself and others in any situation. Will has had a unique experience at Carlisle Barracks. Many of the youth that come to our youth center are here for 10 months

to one year because they have a parent that attends the Army War College, and then they move on. However, Will has been at Carlisle Barracks for 3 years and has seen friends come and go many times. Not only has he helped new youth acclimate to the community, but he befriends the new youth each year and tries to introduce them into groups that have lived here for many years. In extension of this ability Will has been a Boy Scout for the last seven years. As a Boy Scout Will has worked with children with special needs, served as a chaplain's aid, a patrol leader and a troop guide. In these leadership positions he has been a role model for younger scouts and gained an understanding of what it takes to not only lead, but to follow as well.

Finally, Will has also been an assistant section leader in the trumpet section of his high school marching band. Will's personality is self-reliant yet caring and compassionate. He shows this compassion through his volunteer work. In the past year Will has accumulated over 80 hours of community service at our youth center on Post, and in the local community. At the youth center Will is our resident DJ. He volunteers his time to assist in running the music for our Welcome Jam events, elementary socials and teen dances. Within the Carlisle Barracks community, Will volunteers at the chapel to help with Vacation Bible School and geographical bachelor's dinners for which he helps cook, serve, and clean up after the meal. Finally, he also volunteers with local food bank, Project Share. When donating his time to Project Share Will he helps out at the farm stand and at the warehouse to get goods ready for distribution. He also aids in keeping the food organized and the warehouse clean. As a military youth, Will has developed a resilient character. He knows what is necessary be a productive member of our society. He dreams of attending Texas A&M University to major in Secondary Science Education with a concentration in Chemistry.

The 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 access to the tools they need to build the great futures they imagine. Toyota, the Signature Sponsor, is committed to helping improve the quality of life in our communities and has demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring access to a quality education. Additional support is provided by University of Phoenix, a committed partner who has worked with BGCA on many Academic Success initiatives, and the Taco Bell Foundation for Teens, BGCA's premier partner for teen empowerment.

If Will wins at the state competition, he will compete for the title of Regional 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 2015, 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.

For more information about the Youth of the Year program, visit www.bgca.org/yoy .

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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