

2007 National Youth of the Year

Hundreds of Boys & Girls Club members sought the title, but only one National Youth of the Year could be declared the winner. The U.S. Congress gave him a standing ovation. President Bush recognized him for his leadership and volunteer efforts. Even as he received all this attention, Stacey Walker of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, knew he wouldn't be getting such recognition if it wasn't for his Boys & Girls Club.

"It is important to know that we observe not the accomplishments of one individual, but rather the accomplishments of communities filled with good people," said Stacey, as he received the National Youth of the Year award on Sept. 21, 2006 at the annual Congressional Breakfast in Washington, D.C.

Stacey and the four other regional Youth of the Year finalists are proof that it's important to grow up with mentors and foster positive relationships with caring adults. Through dedicated communities, family support and guidance from Boys & Girls Club professionals, our young people have a chance to become strong leaders and achieve success. With this guidance, each of the finalists not only managed to turn their own lives around, they are helping those around them – and making a tremendous difference.

To celebrate this national recognition, the finalists spent a week in Washington, D.C., attending many exciting events, including a Washington Nationals game and a live taping of the *Today* show. The highlight? They visited the White House, where they each received a President's Volunteer Service Award for selfless contributions to their communities.



Stacey Walker – 2006 National Youth of the Year

Stacey Walker lost his mother at the age of 4, but the wisdom and strength of his grandmother carried him through, shaping him into a stellar young man.

The Boys & Girls Club of Cedar Rapids also provided a means for Stacey to excel. He started out as a member, but quickly transitioned into a mentor and Club staffer. Through Passport to Manhood, a program that teaches boys about living responsibly, he helped others escape their dim surroundings to pursue brighter goals.

"The Club taught me to work harder to get through my situation, rather than to make excuses," says Stacey. "I am now able to help other youngsters going through the same struggle."

In addition to playing football in high school, Stacey excelled in academics and participated in student government and the debate team. He was presented with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award and selected as a member of the National Council on Youth Leadership.

Stacey also founded and coached the Student Athlete Mentoring program, where he and other athletes mentored at-risk youth in sportsmanship, academics and everyday life.

Currently a freshman at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, Stacey is studying business law.

Alyse Eady – Southwest

Alyse Eady has a gentle heart, but the strength of a lion. At age 4, Alyse took care of her mother, who battled lupus. Four years later, she began caring for her father, who experienced sight impairment, along with skin and organ damage, following an allergic reaction to a prescription drug.

At the Fort Smith Boys & Girls Club in Arkansas, Alyse found comfort and mastered her leadership abilities. As a dedicated volunteer for Power Hour, a homework assistance program, she helped younger members reach their academic goals. Alyse taught cheerleading and headlined local and national Club events.

"Club staff showed a genuine interest in my life by providing recreation and companionship," says Alyse. "They taught me that life is a series of experiences that can build character, and if obstacles are what you get, then you should walk boldly through them."

Alyse's commitment to serving others led to her crowning achievement as the first African-American Miss Teen Arkansas and recognition by President Bush for volunteerism in 2004.

She maintained a 3.5 GPA and was inducted into the National Honor Society and Future Business Leaders of America. Alyse is pursuing a public relations degree at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark.

David Shelly – Northeast

At age 16, David Shelly was forced to make a life-altering decision: continue to struggle to live with his mother, who was addicted to cocaine, or pursue a better life by moving in with his uncle and aunt. He chose the latter and also sought guidance from the Sarah Heinz House Boys & Girls Club in Pittsburgh.

At the Club, David blossomed into a happier teenager and took advantage of the programs, joining teen groups and serving as a role model for his peers. He used his experiences to speak about drug abuse. David also learned technical skills and robotics production, which led to his role as the Club's Webmaster.

"As everything was falling apart at my mother's house, Sarah Heinz House became my safe place," says David. "The staff quickly filled in the emotional gaps of my childhood and provided many escapes through personal relationships and positive programs."

Although David held a part-time job, he also participated in roadside cleanups and assisted elderly neighbors. In high school, he played on the varsity football team and was named student of the month.

David is studying technology at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, becoming the first in his family to attend college.



Alyse Eady



Montorie Lee



David Shelly



Kelly Barefield

Montorie Lee – Southeast

Like most teens, Montorie Lee tried hard to fit in, which often led to making bad choices. However, joining the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mitchell County in Camilla, Ga. changed his perspective and put him on a positive path.

At the Club, Montorie learned to value and be comfortable with himself. His growth as a young man positioned him to share his wisdom with other Club members. Montorie became an invaluable member of the Club, earning positions as computer lab aide and junior staffer.

"The Club helped me understand all my imperfections," says Montorie. "The staff also let me know that I should not, that I cannot, be ashamed of who I am." He gave back to his community by assisting in coordinating annual Veterans Day programs and raising funds for Hurricane Katrina victims.

Montorie was known for his diligence as a JROTC cadet at Mitchell Baker High School, where he received numerous awards. He also served as senior class spokesman on the student council.

Montorie is planning to attend Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. to study the medical field. He is the first in his family to attend college.

Kelly Barefield – Pacific

Kelly Barefield has seen her share of perils. By age 6, she was accustomed to dialing 911. With a father who abused her mother, she and her five younger siblings lived in a home filled with violence, depression and struggle. However, Kelly's life changed when her mother found the inner strength to leave and move the family to another state.

At the Boys & Girls Club of King County in Seattle, Kelly found comfort in the staff and other Club members, which quickly restored her confidence and self-worth. She started a dance team and served as president of the Keystone Club, a teen leadership group dedicated to community service.

"The Club taught me to listen, learn and overcome," says Kelly. "I've also learned to be proud of what I've accomplished and to be confident that I will accomplish more."

Outside of the Club, Kelly volunteered at retirement homes, shelters and soup kitchens. She was named to the National Honor Roll and Who's Who Among American High School Students, and served as captain of the varsity cheer squad.

Kelly attends Western Washington University and hopes to become a teacher. She will be the first in her family to attend college.



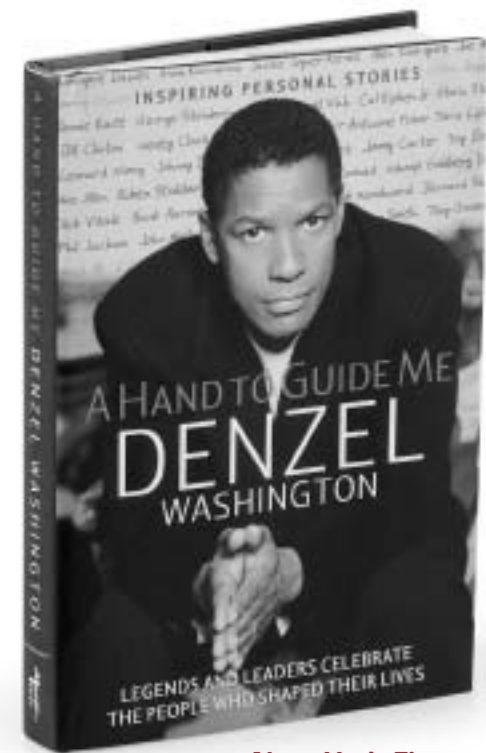
Thank You, Reader's Digest!

Stacey Walker is Boys & Girls Clubs of America's 60th National Youth of the Year. His win begins a yearlong celebration of six decades of the Youth of the Year program, sponsored by the Reader's Digest Foundation.

Using a rigorous judging process, the program recognizes outstanding contributions to a member's family, school, community and Club; academic excellence; and personal challenges and obstacles overcome. The 2006-2007 National Youth of the Year winner was announced at the annual Congressional Breakfast in Washington, D.C. Prominent legislators from both sides of the aisle were moved by the finalists' presentations about their struggles and triumphs.

Thanks to the Reader's Digest Foundation's continuous support, hundreds of youth have been able to attend college through scholarships. As National Youth of the Year, Stacey received \$26,000 in college scholarships from Reader's Digest. The other four national finalists received \$11,000 each.

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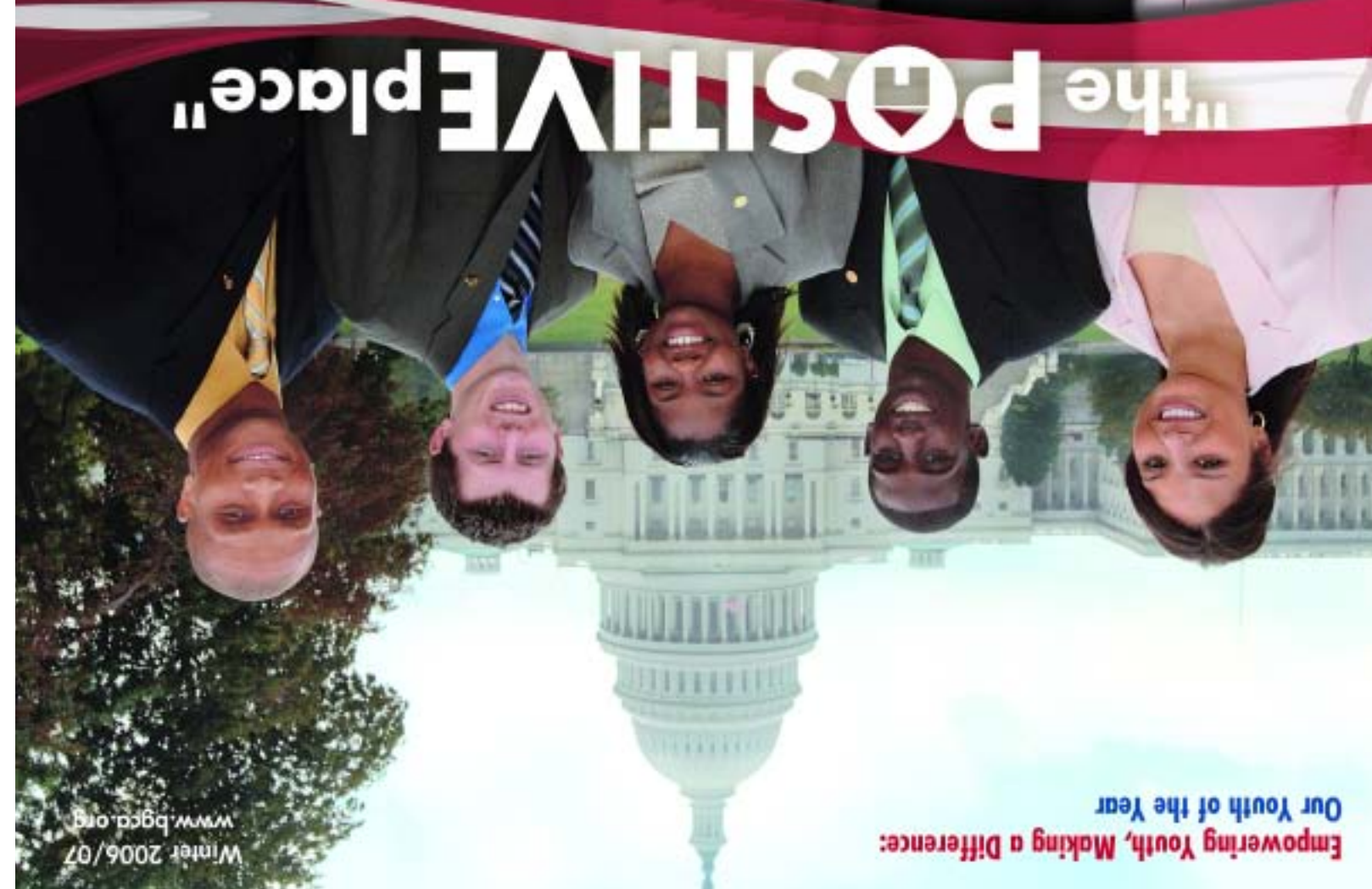
Boys & Girls Clubs of America spokesman Denzel Washington knows that you "don't go it alone." As a young boy, Washington found hope, purpose and direction from his local Boys Club. He attributes much of his success to Billy Thomas, the staff member who starred in BGCA's popular public service announcement some 10 years ago.

In *A Hand to Guide Me*, the Academy Award-winning actor shares the positive boyhood influences who helped shape and guide him. More than 70 legends and leaders also reflect on the mentors who made a dramatic difference in their lives.

So many share their personal stories: former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, Hank Aaron, Muhammad Ali, Yogi Berra, Wesley Clark, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Joe Morgan, Toni Morrison, Colin Powell, Bonnie Raitt, Cal Ripken, Jr. and Bernard Shaw. Several are Club alumni.

Discover Mentorship

Available at national retailers for \$24.95, *A Hand to Guide Me* reflects the importance of caring adults in every child's life. Share the gift of mentorship with friends and family. It is the perfect way to share the true meaning of the holiday season.



Joy and Hope for the Holidays

In communities across the nation and around the world, the holiday season often brings joy and hope. Many people take a moment to reflect on how fortunate they are to have friends and family in their lives. At Boys & Girls Clubs, we are privileged to have our 2007 Youth of the Year winners, who do so much for those around them, in addition to inspiring us with their stories of remarkable courage. As you'll see in this issue of *The Positive Place*, we celebrate the five regional Youth of the Year finalists with great joy – and hope they will continue to motivate others with their triumphant spirit.

For nearly 60 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Youth of the Year program has celebrated the achievements of Club members. Because of Clubs, young people have excelled as volunteers, leaders, students and at family life. With support from the Reader's Digest Foundation, BGCA annually recognizes these youth with scholarships and a national ceremony. Hundreds of our best and brightest Club members compete on the local, state and regional levels before becoming one of the five national finalists. Once the National Youth of the Year is chosen, the winner serves as a national spokesperson and ambassador, representing some 4.6 million young people.

These remarkable young adults are true models for today's youth. They have overcome tremendous challenges, such as family problems, violence and drug abuse that impacts their communities. They not only showed that these problems could be conquered, they showed others how to overcome them, too.

Young people like Stacey Walker, Alyse Eady, David Shelly, Montorie Lee and Kelly Barefield make the world work. But their success would not be possible without compassionate people like you. Because of your support, we are able to help shape tomorrow's leaders. Thanks for helping to make a brighter future.

Happy Holidays!

A New Way to Give

Finally, there's a way to use the money in your individual retirement account to contribute to a charity – without making a taxable distribution. Last August, President Bush signed into law the Pension Protection Act, which includes a limited-time provision for qualified charitable contributions from IRAs to charity, sometimes referred to as charitable IRA rollovers.

This means that between now and December 31, 2007, you have an unprecedented opportunity to help Boys & Girls Clubs of America by giving a portion of funds you keep in an IRA.

Here's how it works:

- Individuals age 70 and older may transfer up to \$100,000 per year **directly from their IRA to Boys & Girls Clubs of America.**
- The charitable distribution counts toward their minimum distribution requirements.
- The distribution to charity cannot generate a tax deduction. However, because the distribution from the IRA to charity is not included in your taxable income, even taxpayers who do not itemize can benefit from making such a gift.



However, there are some limitations. For instance, distributions may not be used to fund charitable remainder trusts or charitable gift annuities, and state tax treatments may differ. If you are interested in discussing your options under this unique provision, please call Denita Morin at (404) 487-5838 or email at Heritage@bgca.org.

As always, we recommend you seek the advice of your tax and/or legal counsel before deciding on a course of action.

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The Positive Place For Kids

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BGCA'S MISSION

To enable all young people,
especially those who need us most,
to reach their full potential as
productive, caring, responsible citizens.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America comprises a national network of more than 3,900 neighborhood-based facilities, serving 4.6 million young people annually through Club membership and community outreach.

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