

Youth in Service Award: Eligibility Criteria

- This recognition is open to students in grades 6 through 12 who either live or are educated within the boundaries of the Birmingham Public Schools district. Eligible students can attend public or private schools or be home-schooled.
- Qualifying community service initiatives are those that make a positive impact within our local community or support state and national organizations that benefit individuals in our area. A student may be nominated for service contributions taking place primarily during the 12 months preceding the nomination. While international service efforts are commended, they do not qualify a student for nomination in this program.
- The Youth in Service Award is strictly focused on community service and honors volunteer (unpaid) work only. Birmingham Youth Assistance appreciates that many students are highly gifted in academics, athletics, artistic pursuits, and more. However, these factors will not be considered in evaluating nominations unless the talent is directly related to the service (e.g., performing music at senior living communities).

Youth in Service Award: Nomination Procedure

- A nomination consists of two required parts: a submission from the student, and a submission from a qualified nominator. The nomination is not complete until Birmingham Youth Assistance has received both submissions.
- A qualified nominator is an adult who is unrelated to the student being nominated and is very familiar with the details of his/her community service. Examples include a representative of the service organization for which the student volunteered, a representative of the student's school (Community Service Organizer, teacher, principal, etc.), or someone who benefitted directly from the student's service.

It is the student's responsibility to follow up with the nominator to make sure both portions have been submitted by the deadline of Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

Students and nominators may start their submission utilizing the link on the Birmingham Youth Assistance website. Please have available all information listed below, as a partially-completed submission cannot be saved.

Student Submission Requirements

- A yearbook-style (head and shoulders) photograph of yourself
- A 500-750 word essay describing your qualifying community service involvement over the past year. It must clearly portray what you did, why you did it, who benefitted, and how your efforts made an impact. Your essay should include:

1. **What you did:** Describe your main community service activity and what inspired you to do it.
2. **Impact:** Explain how your work benefited others. Include specific results or numbers if possible (e.g., people helped, money raised, items collected).
3. **Time and commitment:** Estimate when you started and ended the service, and about how many hours you contributed—both overall and in the past year.
4. **Other service:** Mention any other volunteer work you've done in the past four years.
5. **Challenges:** If you overcame hardships or obstacles to complete your service, briefly describe them.
6. **Reflection:** Conclude with what you learned, how the experience affected you and why community service is important to you.

Nominator Submission Requirements

- A brief 250 –500 word statement describing the student's community service. Your nomination should include:
 1. **Service Description:** Explain what the student has done to benefit their local community during the past twelve months. You may also mention earlier contributions.
 2. **Impact:** Describe how their actions helped others. Include measurable results if possible (e.g., funds raised, items collected, meals served).
 3. **Time Commitment:** Estimate the period of service (approximate dates) and total hours volunteered—both overall and within the past year.
 4. **Challenges:** If the student has overcome significant barriers in order to do their community service, including handicaps, we welcome inclusion of this information.
 5. **Note:** We appreciate that the student you nominate may be accomplished in many areas beyond just their community service. These may include academic achievement, musical or acting talent, or athletic skills. However, we ask that you focus only on their service and not these other factors.

Birmingham Youth Assistance and Birmingham Public Schools may communicate information about the students' achievements both internally and externally. Photographs and a description of their service might appear in school communications, on the Birmingham Youth Assistance website or be shared with news media. Please advise BYA if you have any privacy concerns.

Please contact us at BhamYouthAssistance@gmail.com with any questions