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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Cincinnati Teen Hon’essty James Earns Statewide Recognition in Boys & Girls Clubs of America Youth of the Year Competition**

**CINCINNATI, Ohio (DATE)** - Hon’essty James, the 2026 Youth of the Year for the [Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati](#) (BGCGC), has earned third place in the Ohio Boys & Girls Clubs of America Youth of the Year competition, securing an additional \$2,500 scholarship while representing Greater Cincinnati among the state’s top teen leaders.

James advanced to the statewide competition after being named BGCGC’s 2026 Youth of the Year during a February ceremony held at the Handlebar Club inside Great American Ball Park, where six outstanding teens competed for the organization’s highest regional honor. During that event, she was selected based on her academic success, leadership, service to Club and community, moral character, life goals and public speaking ability.

At the state level, James competed against nine Youth of the Year winners from nine Boys & Girls Clubs organizations across the state, delivering a personal speech and participating in a rigorous judging process designed to identify the state’s top ambassador for Boys & Girls Clubs programming. Her third-place finish highlights her ability to stand out among the best youth leaders in Ohio.

As part of her recognition, James earned a \$2,500 scholarship at the state competition, adding to the scholarship she received as BGCGC’s Youth of the Year winner. These awards will support her pursuit of post-high school educational and career opportunities.

**“Hon’essty represents everything Youth of the Year stands for,”** said Bill Bresser, CEO of BGCGC. **“From the moment she took the stage in Cincinnati to her performance at the state level, she has demonstrated leadership, resilience and a powerful ability to share her story. We are incredibly proud of how she represented our Clubs and our community.”**

The Youth of the Year program is a signature Boys & Girls Clubs initiative and the highest recognition a Club member can achieve. Participants are evaluated on academic success, leadership, service, character and their ability to communicate their experiences and goals.



James' journey from local winner to statewide finalist reflects the impact of Boys & Girls Clubs programming in helping young people build confidence, develop leadership skills and prepare for future success.

For more information about the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati, visit [www.bgcgc.org](http://www.bgcgc.org).

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#### **About the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati**

For more than 85 years, the [Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati](http://www.bgcgc.org) has been dedicated to providing a safe, supportive and enriching environment for local youth. Through academic support, mentorship and career-readiness programs, BGCGC empowers young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens.