



City of Hayward
All-America City Awards Conference
June 16 – 20, 2016

**National Civic League
All-America City**

**Youth Leadership Award
Nominees**

**From:
Hayward, California**



City of Hayward

All-America City Youth Award Application

Sophia Espinosa

Ms. Sophia Espinosa is nominated for the All-America City Youth Award on behalf of the City of Hayward for her outstanding volunteer efforts throughout our city. Sophia is a kind hearted and mature senior who attends Moreau Catholic High School, one of the City's premier private schools. She is majoring in Political Science.

At a young age Sophia's parents instilled in her the value of giving back to her community. Sophia began volunteering in Hayward by joining the Hayward Youth Commission in 2013 as a sophomore. The Hayward Youth Commission advises the Hayward City Council, the Board of Directors of the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD) – a separate local government agency – and the Hayward Unified School District (HUSD) on matters that impact young people in the Hayward community.

The Youth Commission works on a number of projects and activities throughout the year, including: identifying youth needs, organizing youth speak-outs and conferences, etc. Under Sophia's leadership, the Youth Commission is now working on such issues as: combating human trafficking; establishing mandatory community service hours at our local high schools; increasing access and affordability to public transportation for Hayward youth; and an annual Youth Survey designed to identify community needs through a "Youth lens", the results of which are reported to the City, HARD and HUSD governing bodies.

This past year Sophia was voted by her peers to serve as the Hayward Youth Commission President. She also serves as the Hayward Youth Commission's liaison to the Hayward Coalition for Healthy Youth (HCHY). The HCHY is a program of the Eden Youth and Family Center, a nonprofit organization located in South Hayward, one of the City's low-income areas. The staff at the HCHY was so impressed by Sophia's quality of work and by her dedication to her community, that they invited her to join HCHY. Sophia was also recently invited to serve on the HCHY Board of Directors, and this past summer represented the HCHY at a conference held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Her work on the Hayward Youth Commission also exposed her to other volunteer opportunities throughout the city. This past year she has worked planning and implementing the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District's annual Easter Egg Hunt; volunteered at the annual Bike Rodeo in downtown Hayward – aimed at promoting safe bike riding skills and practices; and during her spring break she helped plan and implement the City of Hayward's annual National Volunteer Week Celebration where over 600 City volunteers were recognized for their work in the community. She was among the 600 awardees.

As if Sophia's volunteer work in the community was not enough, her education, which is her first priority has outstanding results as well. She has received scholarly awards for Outstanding Achievement in Spanish and English, as well as for maintaining a grade point average of over 4.0 in both the 10th and 11th grades. She is graduating this year with a 4.17 GPA, and has earned a full-scholarship to Saint Edward's University in the state of Texas. We are sure that this is just the beginning of a very successful future for yet another successful "Made in Hayward" student.



City of Hayward

All-America City Youth Award Application

Antonio Isais

Antonio Isais, a 19 year-old Chabot Community College student, began his dedication to public service in 2013 when he joined the Hayward Civil Air Patrol (CAP) cadet squadron (U.S. Air Force Auxiliary). During his tenure, Antonio earned several leadership awards. These awards included: the 122nd Cadet Training Squadron Honor Cadet; the Air Force Sergeant's Association Award; the Air Force Association Award for Leadership; and Second Commander's Accommodations. In his final years with CAP, Antonio served as the Commander of the East Bay Cadet Squadron 18. In this role, he was responsible for leading and training a staff of 10, as well as over 25 cadets. Concurrently, he served as the group representative for the State of California's Cadet Advisory Council (CAC). He spent his time in CAC advocating for the cadets in his group for more training activities, funding, and regulation reform.

Antonio was truly "Made in Hayward", as his entire education – grades K-12 – took place through the Hayward Unified School District (HUSD). In 2015, he graduated from Mt. Eden High School. While there, he was active with the Puente Program. This program aims to serve California's educationally underrepresented groups by helping them apply and obtain acceptance into colleges and universities. Antonio was responsible for organizing several speakers to come and address the Puente classes. One of those guest speakers included the Executive Director and CEO of La Familia, Aaron Ortiz. Mr. Ortiz is an alumnus of Mt. Eden High School and now serves as the Executive Director of La Familia Counseling Service, a Hayward Promise Neighborhood Community Partner organization.

In high school, Antonio was also an active part of Associated Student Body (ASB). In 2013-14, he served as the Student Representative to the Hayward Unified School District Board of Trustees. In a time of unrest in the district, particularly at his school, Antonio advocated for student's concerns as well as the designation of a principal that would bring a healthy school climate and an esprit de corps throughout the campus. His senior year, Antonio was elected by his peers to serve as ASB Vice President. During his term he focused on connecting disconnected groups on campus. He did this by hosting lunch-time rallies designed to engage those groups.

In 2015, Antonio was appointed by the Hayward City Council to the City's Community Services Commission (CSC). This Commission reviews funding applications from local nonprofit organizations and makes funding recommendations to the Council. In his position as the CSD Parliamentarian, he assures that bi-laws and other legal procedures are followed, as well as help to maintain order during meetings. Antonio was also appointed to serve on the Downtown Specific Task Force and is currently Chairperson of the South Hayward Family Center low-income neighborhood revitalization project, helping to ensure that this community development endeavor benefits the area's low-income and other residents, and does not result in gentrification.

In addition to furthering his education at Chabot Community College, Antonio works for the Hayward Adult School and La Familia Counseling Services as a Youth Outreach Coordinator, funded by the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. Through this program Antonio works to engage youth, 16 to 24, who are not currently enrolled in comprehensive high school. He helps them to complete their high school diploma or G.E.D, and helps participants receive various services through the Career Readiness Program, including: paid and unpaid work experience, tutoring, adult mentoring and other supportive services.



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All-America City Youth Award Application

Henry Chi

Henry Chi is being nominated for the All-America City Youth Award because of his successfully overcoming a personal challenge, resulting in a lasting impact that he continues to have on the Hayward community. Henry's story, and positive influence, has touched the lives of many people, from elementary students through high school seniors and community residents of all ages.

Not long ago, Henry was struggling with academics; and when not in school, he and trouble had a way of finding one another. Then, Henry found his passion - food. Since then, he has been dedicated to community engagement through inspiring a healthier Hayward.

Henry started a local community garden in his neighborhood as a founding member of the Tennyson High School Community Garden Youth Council. He designed the garden, conducted outreach for new members, and led a collaborative effort to create community agreements and rules of participation. Because of Henry's innovative efforts, 30 low-income families have a garden plot and monthly garden education workshops. Also because of Henry's work, thousands of local students and families get to benefit from eating fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown on the community garden and school farm. Henry also collaborated with local pediatricians from Kaiser Permanente, and doctoral students from the University of California at Berkeley, to participate in a youth-led participatory action research project that focused on the status of local recreational parks in Hayward. Henry spent a summer analyzing parks from a youth perspective. He collected data on safety, beauty, and access of the Hayward parks, blogged about his findings, and mapped together his findings with his peer's findings to create a report. The report was then turned into an interactive map that local pediatricians use in consultations with parents. Because of the work that Henry did to collect information, Hayward's families are better able to access outdoor recreation in the Hayward community.

Henry has also worked on civic engagement as a participant in the Shape-Up Hayward group. This action research project conducted by a group of youth, professors, local business owners, teachers, administrators, and community members who focused on providing better access to food, employment, and safe places to exercise. The group analyzed Hayward public policies in combination with community research in order to design recommendations to the Hayward City Council on ways to improve access to healthy food, youth employment and safe places to recreate in Hayward.

Knowing that there was a lot to learn from peers doing similar work in other communities, Henry also participated in Food Justice Youth Leadership trainings at Pie Ranch in Pescadero, California, and in a National Career and Technical Education Career Pathways research project studying Youth Food Justice work around the country. Henry's personal leadership development has helped him create the City of Hayward's youth-powered sustainable food system. What is undeniably unique about Henry is that he does all of this work not because it looks good on a resume, but simply because he personally enjoys a healthy lifestyle and knows that, with a little encouragement and better access, many other people in his community want to enjoy living healthy as well. Henry knows no stranger, finding it as easy to teach a senior how to weed a bed of kale as it is to listen as the elder teaches him about starting a community garden in Senegal.

While finishing his education, Henry also successfully turned a pilot internship with the Hayward Historical Society's Cannery Café and Catering Company into a permanent part-time job, and is starting his own Urban Farming Consulting business, where he is sharing his expertise in urban farming with local residents.

We are proud to nominate Henri Chi for this prestigious award.



City of Hayward

All-America City Youth Award Application

Reymond Pardini

Reymond Pardini is being nominated for the All-American City Youth Award because of the integrity, self-initiation, wisdom and lasting positive effect he has had on the Hayward community – all demonstrated in the face of a recent tragedy.

In August of 2015 Hayward suffered a tragic loss. Kionta Murphy Jr., a 17 year old and close friend of Reymond Pardini's, was shot and killed while walking a female friend home late one night. Kionta had just graduated from Mt. Eden High School, which is one of Hayward's three public high schools. When violence claims the life of a friend, many people turn to revenge as a response. At some of the vigils that followed the shooting, Reymond heard whispers from others who wanted to take matters into their own hands, and not leave justice to the police.

That, however, is not the path that Reymond chose. "That shocked me," Reymond said. "That's not at all how I saw Kionta." Reymond, instead, wanted to honor his close friend by doing the right thing. He decided that a much more fitting response to such a dark act was to shine a light - literally. While revisiting the neighborhood where Kionta was shot, Reymond noticed how dark the area was at night. Without telling anyone, he took the initiative to contact city officials to see what it would take to install a street light in the neighborhood to make it safer. A list of rules and complex procedures were provided to him.

This did not deter Reymond. He spent the following weeks taking required measurements and pictures. He also, on his own, began knocking on the doors of the residents in the area to get them to sign a required City petition indicating that they would support adding a light to a utility pole near the area where the crime occurred. The level of support that Reymond received was overwhelmingly positive.

When the city learned of what Reymond was doing, they didn't wait for him to finish. The city began to improve the street lights up and down the block. The admittedly shy sixteen-year-old had gotten the attention of his city's leaders, and earned their respect in the process. Reymond says he didn't expect his plan to work so well, though he is happy it did. He says that he hopes this location will never be darkened again by violence.

"It was more than just doing something," Reymond said. "It was helping communities and people." It is also the path that his friend, Kionta Murphy, Jr., would have chosen.