



**Commonwealth of Virginia**

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## **BOARD MATTER**

**October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### **Proclamation request for Abigail Akyea, BGCA Youth of the Year finalist**

Mr. Chairman,

Every year the Boys and Girls Club of America selects a teen for its National Youth of the Year award. Thousands of Boys and Girl Club teens participate in local, state, and regional Youth of the Year events to help determine the winner. Ultimately, six teens, including five regional winners and a national military youth winner, advance to the National Youth of the Year celebration. I am very pleased to announce that one of our very own Fairfax County residents, Abigail Akyea, from the Boys and Girls Murraygate club won the opportunity to represent teens from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington (BGCGW), the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Southeast region of Boys and Girls Club of America, which enabled her to compete as one of the six finalists at the National Youth of the Year celebration. While she did not win first place, Abigail is truly an exceptional youth leader in our community.

Abigail has been part of the Murraygate Boys and Girls club since she was in kindergarten. In Abigail's own words, "the Club introduced us to a world that most kids can only imagine and gave us opportunities that we read about in books." As the daughter of first-generation immigrants from Ghana. The Boys and Girls Club staff taught Abigail to appreciate her heritage and individuality. That appreciation sparked a passion for inclusivity in Abigail, and she started West Potomac Change — a club that promotes inclusivity and diversity among the faculty and students at West Potomac high school. Abigail has also served as her Boys & Girls Club's Keystone president and represented her Club as an ambassador with BGCA's inaugural cohort of The President's Circle. Abigail is an advocate for her peers, impacting others as a teen mentor, speaker, and volunteer. In the future, Abigail would like to go into business and use her expertise and resources to help build and support Clubs, so they can continue to be places that change lives. I would like to share a powerful quote from Abigail, "True change starts with investment in today's youth. These investments will create stronger inclusive communities that are innovative and ready to change the world for the better!"

Mr. Chairman, in recognition of Abigail Akyea's outstanding accomplishment as a finalist in the Boys and Girls Club of America's National Youth of the Year award ceremony and to also acknowledge her commitment to creating inclusive communities. I move that a

proclamation be prepared to be presented to her at an upcoming meeting of the Board of Supervisors.