

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### 2015 Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay Youth of the Year Announced

*George W. Jenkins Family Town 'n Country Club Member, Lisbet Hernandez, earns Youth of the Year title*

**TAMPA, FL (January 17, 2015)** – Selected among several outstanding youth, Lisbet Hernandez, was announced as the Youth of the Year for Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay. Eighteen-year-old Lisbet is a true example of an extraordinary young lady recognized by Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) for her sound character, leadership skills and willingness to give back to the community.

Being named Youth of the Year is the highest honor a Boys & Girls Club member can receive. As BGCA's premier youth recognition program, Youth of the Year recognizes outstanding contributions to a Club Member's family, school, community and Boys & Girls Club, as well as overcoming personal challenges and obstacles. Youth of the Year encourages Club Members to reach their full potential by achieving academic success, leading healthy lifestyles and contributing to their communities. Youth of the Year honorees are shining examples and living proof that great futures start at Boys & Girls Clubs.

"Lisbet is an exceptional teen and outstanding role model to the younger Club Members at the Town 'n Country site," said Jennifer Hayes, Director of Program Services for Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay. "Teens like her are so deserving of this recognition because of the commitment shown to themselves, their Clubs, and their communities. I have no doubt that she will go far in this competition and the organization is looking forward to supporting her on this journey."

A senior at Leto High School, Lisbet maintains a 5.8 GPA while being involved in a number of extracurricular activities, such as the National Honor Society, Editor in Chief of her school's Yearbook Club, President of the Keystone Club, Senior Class Club Treasurer, and member of the BETA Club.

Lisbet arrived in Tampa with her family after leaving Cuba at nine years old. The transition for her and her family was met with many obstacles that one can anticipate experiencing when moving to a new place and the initial adjustment was both frustrating and challenging. Everything changed for Lisbet though after arriving at the George W. Jenkins Family Town 'n Country Boys & Girls Club - she discovered a home away from home.



*Pictured Left to Right: Meagan Beck, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay; Lisbet Hernandez, Youth of the Year; Gerald Knapp, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay*



“At first, the Club was a place that gave me the opportunity to simply serve my community and get volunteer hours,” said Lisbet. “Not much time passed before it became more than that. The Club, full of family and opportunity, became my promised land. The Club reminds me to be proud of the hardships I have overcome in the past. It reminds me that I have a place to come home to if anything goes wrong; a place where I can get myself together when I am feeling broken.”

If Lisbet wins at the State Competition in May, she will compete for the title of Southeast Region Youth of the Year and earn a \$10,000 scholarship. Five regional winners will advance to Washington, DC in September 2015, to compete for the title of BGCA’s National Youth of the Year. The National Youth of the Year will receive an additional scholarship of up to \$50,000 from The Rick and Susan Goings Foundation and will have the opportunity to meet with the President of the United States in the White House.

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay has been a positive force in the community since 1926; enabling young people to become productive, responsible and caring citizens through structured programming, safe learning environments and dedicated staff. With a focus on three core priority outcomes – Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles, and Improving Character & Leadership, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay provides opportunities to build new skills that raise a Club Member’s belief that he or she can succeed and receive recognition for personal, social and academic accomplishments. With 18 Clubs throughout Hillsborough and Pasco counties, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay makes futures great for more than 11,000 young people each year.