

2026 YES AWARDS

Youth Excellence in Service

Celebrating youth who put service above self.

In 2019, the Canopy Housing Foundation and its Canopy Realtor® Association members instituted the **Youth Excellence in Service (Y.E.S.) Award** to recognize and celebrate the area's youth who are improving the quality of life in the region. Young people throughout Mecklenburg and Iredell counties are engaged in some phenomenal efforts to address a number of critical issues affecting our communities.

The Canopy Realtor® community believes that young people who are engaged in a life of service mature into adults who learn to care about those in need. This award was established to further encourage youth in their efforts to build a stronger community. It is our hope that all young people will realize their potential to impact the lives of others and, in return, find fulfillment in their own lives.

Prior YES Award Recipients

2025: Alexander Riley - An inspiring young leader dedicated to serving his school and community while balancing a full high school course load and dual enrollment in community colleges (working towards his CNA).

2024: Rosie Smolowitz - President of the Teen Volunteer Board for the Ronald McDonald House, Founder of Pints 4 Providers and Sababa Jewish Culture Club, and Student-to-Student Teen Ambassador.

2023: ZaNia Stinson - Founded Z Feeds Angel Food Project, which provides food and necessities to the homeless.

2022: Brandon Wilson - Created a nonprofit called Beemer Inc., which sells wristbands signifying hope with proceeds going to charity.

2021: Anirudh Sengupta - Created Xcelerate NC, an organization helping K-5th graders excel in math and public speaking.

2020: Alexa Nicole Suarez - Founded the HILL Project (Hispanic Initiative in Literacy and Learning), which works to increase literacy & reduce drop out rates within the Latino community.

2019: Sisters Mykia and Zariah White - Created Turning Point Teen Club to educate on teens domestic violence.

NOMINATIONS DUE: 5/31/26 - 5 PM

MAIL OR EMAIL APPLICATIONS TO:

Foundation@Canopyrealtors.com

YES Award Review Committee

1120 Pearl Park Way, Ste. 200 | Charlotte, NC 28204

Who/What

Youth ages 10 to 18 in Mecklenburg and Iredell counties are eligible to be nominated.

When

Call for nominations goes out
March 1, 2026

Where

The recipient will be honored at the Foundation's awards celebration on July 22nd.

Award

The chosen recipient will receive a commemorative plaque and \$500 to be donated to the charity of their choice in their honor.

Nomination submission

Nominations are due to the Canopy Housing Foundation by 5 p.m. on May 31. All nomination forms should be complete; incomplete nominations will not be reviewed by the panel. Please be as specific as possible as to the attributes of the individual nominee.

Name of Nominee(s): _____	Name of Nominator(if different): _____
Age of Nominee at Application deadline: _____	Relationship to Nominee: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____
City: _____	City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____	State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____	Telephone Number: _____
E-mail Address: _____	E-mail Address: _____

Please make sure your nomination narrative includes the following:

■ **SERVICE BACKGROUND:**

Provide a detailed description of the nominee's service to the community, include the following:

- List organizations, projects or areas that have been positively impacted by the nominee, and the nominees's specific role and actions.
- Detail changes to the community that have occurred as a result of the nominee's service.
- Describe how the nominee's approach to a certain effort has served as an innovative approach in terms of meeting a community need; the emphasis should be on service and not activism.

■ **IMPACT:**

Provide a detailed description of the nominee's humanitarian work that includes the following:

- How many people have been served or impacted by this nominee?
- What financial resources have been secured as a result of the nominee's involvement?
- Has this nominee engaged others in the project / cause? If so, how many?
- What results (short-term and long-term) has this young person achieved?

■ **BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION ON THE NOMINEE:**

Tell us more about the young nominee by highlighting the following:

- How long has the nominee been involved in this project / cause?
- Why does the nominee have a concern for this issue?
- What personal interests, passions, or skills does the nominee possess that have been beneficial to the project?
- What is **unique** or **special** about this young person that makes them deserving of the YES (Youth Excellence in Service) Award?

■ **LIST OF NOMINEES EXPERIENCES & ACTIVITIES**

■ **PERSONAL IMPACT STATEMENT (Required for self-nominations)**

■ **SUPPORT DOCUMENTS**

- Newspaper or magazine articles
- Press releases
- Blogs
- Letters of support (Letters should be compelling and fully convey the attributes of the nominee. Please do not include letters from family members.)

NOMINATIONS DUE

**5/31/26
5:00 PM**

**Late nominations will
not be considered**

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