

Contact: Chelsea Lyman
Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County
Phone 941-761-2582
Fax 941-761-2462
Email: chelsea.lyman@bgcmanatee.org
5211 Manatee Ave West
Bradenton, FL 34209

PRESS RELEASE

LOCAL TEEN NAMED BOYS & GIRLS CLUB YOUTH OF THE YEAR

Natalie Dupoux is awarded as the 2008 Youth of the Year

BRADENTON – Natalie Dupoux is a true example of an extraordinary youth. Natalie, age 17, has been selected as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County's 2008 Youth of the Year. Dupoux is among hundreds of local Youth of the Year winners across the country 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. The title recognizes outstanding contributions to a member's family, school, community and Boys & Girls Club, as well as personal challenges and obstacles overcome. This program was founded over 60 years ago through the generosity of the Reader's Digest Foundation.

Natalie was first introduced to the Clubs five years ago. Her mom thought the Palmetto Club would be the perfect place for her because it was close by and she knew that Natalie loved kids. Natalie credits the Club for giving her numerous opportunities and opening many doors that had previously been closed to her. She loves summer at the Palmetto Club because this is when she can spend the most time with other club members and have a greater positive influence on them. When speaking with Natalie it's obvious she is most excited about using her Youth of the Year title to as an example to younger kids in the Clubs. She praises her mom and sister for being her mentors and showing her that no matter what struggles may come along it is important to always strive for the best even when it seems impossible. With Natalie's senior year closely approaching she would like to immerse her self in the community before she heads off to college to major in Business Administration and minor in Dance. Her advise for the next generation of Boys & Girls Clubs kids is to "be leaders and don't be influenced by the wrong thing and the wrong people". With her positive attitude there is no doubt she'll make her dream of owning a dance studio and starting a family come true.

"Natalie was the obvious choice for Youth of the Year," said Carl Week, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County, "when she started at the club she immediately when out of her way to make sure she was a positive role model other club members could look up to."

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County serves over 2,500 youth at six locations (Harlee Middle School, Southeast High School, Bradenton, East Bradenton, DeSoto and Palmetto).

For more information, please call 761-2582 or visit www.bgcofmanatee.org.



Mission: To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.