

BROOKLINE,DORCHESTER,ROXBURY

Boys & Girls Clubs Youth of the Year mingles with notables at Boston Public Library event

E-mail | Print | Comments (0) Posted by Your Town June 23, 2011 10:46 AM

The Youth of the Year for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston was among those in attendance at a little bash at the Boston Public Library last night, which also featured a raft of notables from around town.

Michael Creese, a Roxbury 18-year-old who is bound for the Wentworth Institute, joined the crowd, talked about the importance of sports in his success in his dramatic weight loss, and posed for pictures.

As Your Town [reported earlier this year](#), among Creese's many accomplishments were academic success in a tough neighborhood and tremendous help to his family.

In an essay for the Youth of the Year contest, Creese wrote: "The term rising to the occasion may bring fear and anguish . . . It did not bring fear or anguish because I had the choice of losing weight or to experience a premature death . . . Since I was a young child, I have always been overweight. The years of harsh, caustic comments and ridicule gave me the blessing to be able to handle it during high school . . . rising to the occasion of losing weight was my top priority."

In a separate essay, Creese wrote about how education is a major priority. "Living in a rather dangerous neighborhood, I had the distinct choice to submit myself to the negative life on the streets or I make a difference for myself and my family by obtaining an education in order move out of this neighborhood."

According to the [Globe's Names column](#), guests at last night's event included the likes of Sox owner John Henry and wife Linda, who'll host the BGCB's annual house party next May at their Brookline manse, board chair Jon Davis and wife Margot, party planner Bryan Rafanelli, Holly Safford of the Catered Affair, Putnam Investments' Bob Reynolds and wife Laura, Fidelity's Abby Johnson and husband Chris McKown, developer Rod Nordblom, Sox doctor Larry Ronan and wife Katie, Staples founder Tom Stemberg, and key contributors Holly McGrath and David Bruce, and Darlene and Jerry Jordan.

Michael was named "Youth of the Year" by the [Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston](#), which serves over 14,000 children and teens across 10 clubs in Boston and Chelsea.

At the [Yawkey Club of Roxbury](#), the 18-year-old is known for his leadership skills. In his 10 years of membership there, he has served as President of the Keystone Club; participated in Life After The Club, swim team, Japanese class, debate club, young men's group, and choir; and has worked as a lifeguard and junior staff in the social recreation room.

"Michael's service and loyalty to the club is unmatched by any other current member," said Teen Director Shiona Botts. "He truly embodies the mission of Boys & Girls Club."

Michael has been a huge help to his parents, both of whom work long hours. Getting his driver's license was more than a teenage right of passage; it allowed Michael to transport his three younger siblings to church and school, and get to his junior staff job at the club. With the extra income from this part-time job, Michael is able to contribute financially to his family.

While managing his dramatic weight loss, he volunteered more than 65 hours in the past year, preparing meals at [Community Servings](#) in Jamaica Plain and tutoring younger club members. He has excelled in four AP classes as a senior at the [John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics & Science](#). He also received a distinguished award for environmental policy at a national science fair competition sponsored by the [Wentworth Institute of Technology](#).

"Regardless of my past, I understand that my education is important to my success. Growing up in a specific neighborhood is not going to decide my fate. I am responsible for my goals, dreams and aspirations," he said.