# ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS

Please use these instructions to help develop your essays. Allow each of the questions and prompts to guide you. Your essays will be judged on content, writing style, clarity and grammar. Work with staff members at your Club to make sure essays are well written and compelling. Together, you can access the Youth of the Year Leadership Suite as a resource at **BGCA.net/YOY.**

Once your drafts are complete, copy/paste your final copy directly into the YOY online application portal. Each essay has a character limit of 5,000, including spaces. (This is roughly the equivalent of a two-page document typed in 11-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 line spacing.)

## Essay 1: My Club Experience

Explain why you come to the Club and how it impacted your life.

Consider the following prompts:

- Describe the skills you have developed and strengthened (e.g., self-awareness, communication, goal setting).
- Describe activities you have participated in or roles you filled.
- Describe a supportive relationship with a peer or adult at the Club.
- Describe examples of your participation in Club community engagement efforts (e.g., campaigns, presentations, service-learning projects).

## Essay 2: What Matters to Me

A great foundation for leadership begins with identifying interests, passions and issues that are important to you. Actions and daily practices shaped by these things help you to be an advocate in your Club or community. For example, if you are passionate about the environment, you practice and advocate for recycling in your Club or home.

Consider the following prompts:

- What sparks your interest or passion?
- What is an issue that is important to you?
- Describe an interest or passion that you have put into action or plan to in the future.

## Essay 3: Personal Growth

This topic is taken directly from the Common Application essay prompts. The Common Application is a platform used by many colleges. Take extra care when drafting this section, as you may be able to use it again when applying to the colleges and universities of your choice. Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Consider the following prompts:

- Highlight some of the strengths you possess that helped you in your journey.
- What did you learn?
- Why is it important to develop an understanding of others?