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## Taiwanese Youth Arts Foundation 2023 Outstanding Taiwanese American Youth Award Essay

During my adolescence and childhood, I have been an active member in the Taiwanese American Community. I have had great personal experiences and interactions that have molded me as a person.

For as long as I can remember, I have been attending Washington DC Taiwanese School (WDCTS). Ever since I was 5 years old, I have looked forward to attending WDCTS every single Sunday. I made lots of friends there and learned a lot about not just the languages, but also the cultures of Taiwan. While I was a picky eater growing up, I always enjoyed eating Taiwanese food.

As I grew up, I became a student counselor for the Dr. Liang Summer Camp. At the camp, I learned to make Taiwanese food, such as bubble tea 珍珠奶茶, sushi, mantou 饅頭 and sweet sticky rice cake 甜糰, as well as to work with younger children, such as prepare water splashing station and help children to clean after themselves. During the WDCTS semesters, we had many cultural events such as the Winter Solstice Celebration and the Mid Autumn Festival. At these events I would go to different stations and do a variety of activities. Oftentimes I also volunteer to host the stations. At WDCTS I have learned many cultural aspects embedded in Taiwanese American life.

As I grew older, I became a member of the local Washington DC Formosa Association of Student Cultural Ambassadors (FASCA). FASCA events are fun and versatile. I enjoy participating in the events ranging from volunteering at the Rockville Bubble Tea Festival to

helping teenagers in Taiwan learn English. In FASCA, I have made many friends with common interests. Through them, I have further improved my knowledge of being a Taiwanese American. At events such as the Bubble Tea Festival, I would help educate people about Taiwanese culture through fun games such as trivia and arts-and-crafts. Over the course of the past year, I accumulated 120+ hours of SSL hours solely from FASCA, which qualified me as a recipient of the Bronz Presidential Award for 2022-2023 school year. This summer, I participated in the FASCA Level-Up program, in which I learned how to organize activities and to become a future Counselor of FASCA.

At around the same time I started FASCA, I began to gain an interest in dragon boat races. Since 2020, I have participated in the WDCTS youth dragon boat team and have enjoyed it thoroughly. In 2022, I applied for a junior captain position of the team and was selected for the position. I helped lead the team during practices, paced at the front of the boat, and helped the captains manage the team. The team members worked so well together that we ended up getting one silver and one gold medal at the 2023 Washington DC Dragon Boat Festival. By May of 2023, I proved myself as a useful member of the team with my collaboraiton and technical skills, and became the co-captain of the team. I am currently leading our youth team doing regular physical training and practices in hope of getting a gold in the youth division in May of 2024.

I have enjoyed myself with the Taiwanese American community and it has molded me into who I am today. I will continue to participate actively in the Taiwanese American community through FASCA and my WDCTS endeavors.