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## **Women of Distinction Information Package for Nominators**

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### **Organization Mission Statement**

As a community leader, the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph builds strong kids, families and communities through lifelong growth in spirit, mind and body.

### **Event Mission Statement**

The YMCA-YWCA of Guelph Women of Distinction event is a fundraising celebration that supports the advancement of women in the Guelph-Wellington community.

### **1. Who is a Woman of Distinction?**

A Woman of Distinction

- is a role model
- contributes to the advancement of women and the quality of women's lives
- demonstrates initiative and a pioneering spirit
- has commitment to her community
- is an outstanding achiever in one of the award categories
- has made her contribution in Guelph or Wellington County, but need not presently live here
- be 16 years of age or older
- consents to her nomination by signing the Nomination Form
- agrees with the mission of the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph
- is currently not holding elected public office
- nominee and nominator may not be current Y staff, members of the Board of Directors or WoD volunteers
- nominations have no posthumous provision

## **2. The Nomination Package**

- a) The **Statement of Nomination** should follow the headings in the nomination brochure. Nominators should answer the questions from the brochure using point form. 800 typed words (approx. 2 pages) is the maximum – it can certainly be shorter if you have covered all the points about the accomplishments of your nominee.

Interview your nominee – ask her each of the headings as a question – for example “How have you educated, supported and encouraged your female peers?” Use her answers to form the Statement of Nomination. As you interview her you may also find she has additional accomplishments.

- b) Please include an up-to-date **Resumé or Biography** for your nominee.
- c) The **two to four Letters of Support** should confirm the content of the Statement of Nomination and should come from sources other than the two nominators. Choose supporters carefully and if possible provide them with a copy of the nomination form and the statement of nomination. This can help them cover specific points raised in the Statement. The letters should refer to your nominee by name, refer to the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph Women of Distinction awards and to the accomplishments of your nominee.

### **Sample Statement of Nomination**

(550 words)

It is with great pleasure that we nominate Stacey Student in the Young Woman of Distinction category for the 2007 YMCA-YWCA of Guelph Women of Distinction Awards.

#### **Contribution as a role model for other women:**

Strong leader and mentor to female students

- Although Stacey is a natural leader among both male and female students, she is a particularly strong role model for other girls.
- She inevitably is at the top of her class academically, but she also participates and without fail takes a leadership position in a variety of activities at school and in the community.
- Her achievements and her talent are second to none and although she moved in the most accomplished circles academically, she consistently befriended girls who sometimes just needed a friend like Stacey.
- She is an inspiration and a role model to her female peers.

#### **Contribution to the Well-being of the Community**

A variety of volunteer activities – particular achievement with the Food Bank.

Professional, volunteer or personal activities in the community

- For her community service requirement, Stacey decided to volunteer 40 hours at the local Food Bank starting in Grade 9. She quickly completed the minimum obligation but continued throughout high school to volunteer regularly at the Food Bank, even though her schedule was very busy. In her final year of high school

she coordinated the schedule for high school volunteers at the food bank, and organized the Christmas food drive at her own school. That year, the collection from her high school was its highest ever, a tribute to Stacey's leadership skills. This year at university, she was a team leader for the Halloween Food Drive, thereby continuing her commitment to this cause.

#### Enhances the lives of people in the community (locally or the larger community)

- Two causes, which were particularly important to her, were fundraisers for cancer research (she participated in Run for the Cure) and the Masai Centre, an AIDS clinic in Africa.
- In elementary school she was a "reading buddy" for younger students in need of help and in high school she was a student volunteer with special education students. She particularly befriended a Down's Syndrome boy whose face lit up whenever Stacey arrived for her volunteer hour. She knew how much he looked forward to her company and she never let him down, no matter how many other commitments she had.

#### Affects positive change for women and girls either directly or by example

- She and three friends roller-bladed in the Rick Hansen Fundraiser, Wheels in Motion just this past year and raised over \$800 dollars for that good cause.
- Sometimes completely independently, Stacey notices a need, and reaches out to help. One particular case involved an elderly neighbour who Stacey helped over many years by performing small chores and running errands. Later when Stacey got her drivers licence, she would often cheerfully drive this by-now widowed woman to various activities. Stacey is compassionate and kind and her spontaneous and engaging personality brightened the day of an otherwise isolated senior citizen. However Stacey always said that she got as much out of the relationship as she gives -she considers her elderly neighbour to be a dear friend.

#### **Individual Achievements**

High personal goals and achievement – future leader

#### Outstanding performance in her field

- Stacey was consistently on the honour role throughout high school and in her final year she graduated with an average of over 90%.
- She was involved in both music and drama performances and was the communications chair of her student's council.
- During high school Stacey also tutored both elementary and high school students in math and in French. She specifically chose students who needed help and in most cases she volunteered her tutoring time. She is fluently bilingual and excelled in the French immersion program
- Stacey is currently studying at the University of Western Ontario and plans to pursue a career in international law. She hopes to have a career where she will be able to help those less fortunate and is particularly interested in women's issues in the third world. She already plans to work on a summer building project in Guyana between second and third year of university.

#### Professional or personal challenges and/or overcoming obstacles

- In her final year of high school, Stacey faced the anxiety and stress of her mother's diagnosis with breast cancer. She handled this challenge with maturity

and intelligence and became a very important member of her mother's support team. As her own way of coping and in spite of her own anxiety, Stacey independently researched the medical implications of her mother's condition, which thankfully turned out to have a very good prognosis. During this family health challenge, Stacey remained positive and she often commented on how it had personalized her attitudes toward medical research and cancer prevention and that it had profoundly strengthened her family bonds.

Participating in a range of activities

- We believe that Stacey's many individual achievements, her contributions to life in Guelph, and her example as a role model for young women make her a Woman of Distinction.

Nomination signed by:  
Ms. Former Teacher  
Superintendent, Upper Grand District School Board

and

Mr. Executive Director  
Guelph Food Bank

Sample Letter of Support #1

Tanya Teacher  
123 School Street  
Guelph ON N1G 8A9

January 18, 2007

YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction  
Nominations Committee

RE: Stacey Student

Stacey Student is a remarkable young woman. It would not be an overstatement to say that in my 10 years of teaching I have not met a more suitable recipient of this award.

Stacey is an outstanding and mature student who influences her fellow students in everything she does. She excels at academics, on the student's council, in music and in drama. But most impressively, she is one of the most natural and effortless leaders that I have met. As a high school student, she made no special effort to be popular, but she was extremely well liked, and respected by absolutely everyone. Her kindness is exceptional and I was particularly impressed by several incidents over the years where Stacey quietly befriended a student in need of either academic or social help. She made a big difference in those girl's lives.

Stacey has a remarkable level of commitment to her community. She volunteered in every good cause that the school supported, raising money for cancer research, AIDS patients in Africa, the Heart and Stroke Fund and many other good causes. Outside of school she volunteered faithfully at the Food Bank, spending a few hours there most Saturdays.

She graduated with high honours from high school and entered University on a prestigious scholarship. She could choose any career she wants, but she intends to study international law and plans to work on issues of poverty in third world countries. She is particularly concerned about the lot of women and children in poor nations. She already has a deep understanding of the world economy and feels deeply about the impact of poverty and disease. Her heroes are Nelson Mandela, Stephen Lewis and Guelph's own Anne Marie Zadjlik. Stacey has great compassion for those less fortunate than herself and she seems to understand that she has a great gift as a future leader. Those of us who know her, know that Stacey Student WILL make a difference!

Tanya Teacher

## **Sample Letter of Support #2**

January 5, 2007

YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction  
Nominations Committee

RE: Stacey Student

I am a friend of Stacey's and I am grateful for her support and the example she set for me - she truly changed my life.

I met Stacey when we were both in grade 11. I suffer from dyslexia and school is difficult for me. Everything takes so much longer for me, and even with help at school I was getting really frustrated. I was tired of having to work so hard at University and college-level courses, and I was trying to get my parents to let me drop down to applied courses. I really hated school at that time and had very little hope that I would be able to even finish high school. When I met Stacey in grade 11 math where of course she was at the top of the class, I was really struggling. One day after class I was nearly in tears and she noticed. She started talking to me and offered to tutor me. That turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me. She helped me with math and although I will never be a mathematician, her help made a big difference in my marks.

But more importantly, Stacey encouraged me to keep trying and not to give up. She made me realize that there is nothing wrong with needing help. She showed me how to come up with a plan and stick to it, so that I can get to where I want to go. My marks are better now and I am taking an extra year to complete my graduation requirements, but I plan to go to university and hope to become a teacher. Stacey was so inspiring and so kind. Her friendship and support was exactly what I needed at a time when I thought no one understood or cared. She taught me that people do care, and that it is important to never give up your dreams. She also taught me to ask for help when I need it - I don't think I would have made it without her.

She really is a woman of distinction and I am proud to be her friend.

Farah Fellow-Student

### **3. The Nomination Package Checklist**

Only the following items will be considered by the selection panel.

- Statement of Nomination
- Resume or biography
- Two to four letters of support

**We regret that no other material (such as videotapes, portfolios, press clippings, photos, etc.) can be considered.**

Please ensure that the nomination package has:

- Two nominators' signatures, as well as the nominators' full contact information, including mailing addresses, telephone numbers and email
- Category selected
- Nominee signature

Deadline for nominations is **January 31, 2007 at 11:00 p.m.** Recipients are announced at the Women of Distinction Awards event on Thursday May 10, 2007 at the River Run Centre. Tickets will be available at the Guelph Y at 519-824-5150 or online at [www.guelphy.org](http://www.guelphy.org). Thank you for taking the time to nominate. If you have questions, please contact Robert Gruber at 519-824-5150 ext. 255 or email [robertgruber@guelphy.org](mailto:robertgruber@guelphy.org)

women  
*of* distinction

**Celebrating over a decade of excellence  
in Guelph and  
Wellington County**