



Annual Awards By MY Project USA

MY Project USA is all about fostering and empowering young leaders and groom them in to community leaders, public servants, organizers and entrepreneurs and anything else that they want to become to positively impact the lives of their fellow human beings. Throughout the year, we create several spaces for youth and adults to help them become somebody by serving the community. Once a year, we recognize their accomplishments by presenting them with awards and certificates of achievements.

In 2019, we will be presenting following awards:

About Deah Barakat Award:

Deah's Community Service Award is given in honor of Deah Shaddy Barakat. A 23-year-old Syrian American that dedicated his life to humanitarian causes. He was a 2013 graduate of North Carolina State University who had majored in business administration. In 2015, he was a second-year student in the UNC School of Dentistry. He and ten other dental students were planning to travel to Turkey to treat Syrian refugees as part of a project organized by UNC-Chapel Hill School of Dentistry and the Syrian-American Medical Society. He also worked to provide free dental supplies and food to the homeless in his spare time.

Unfortunately, he, his wife Yusor Abu-Salha, 21, and her sister Razan Abu-Salha, 19, were brutally murdered by a neighbor on February 10th, 2015. This incident is known as the Chapel Hill Shooting. Collectively, they have been called and celebrated as Our Three Winners by their families, friends and the rest of the world.

All three of them were outstanding, caring, vibrant, beloved, bright young Americans working at home and abroad, selflessly, to ease other people's pain and to make this world a better place for everyone. Their short but well-lived, focused lives are great reminders for us all. May they all rest in peace and receive the highest rewards in the Heaven. Indeed they were all winners in this world and will be in the Hereafter.

MY Project USA's founder, Zerqa Abid, has been a family friend to the Barakat family since Deah was a child. His loss is very personal to her and to MY Project USA's family. We have named our thrift store, "MY Deah's" per the request of Deah Barakat's father, Namee Barakat. From day one, we have been committed to further the legacies of Our Three Winners.

In the last four years, we have had the privilege to work with several youth from different backgrounds. We have proudly fostered them and have seen them turn into awesome community leaders. We recognize that there are many Muslim youth across Central Ohio that might also be investing their time in helping other communities through other organizations. We would like to recognize their leadership and community service by presenting them with different awards honoring the legacy of Deah, Yusor and Razan.

About Chrys Gee Activist Award:

Chrys Gee was a loving wife and mother in Columbus, Ohio, who became an activist in the aftermath of the 2016 elections. Though she had always worked hard to make this world a better place, following the Election, Chrys seemed ever present.

Alongside her husband and children, she showed up at every rally, march and vigil. She showed up for hearings and testimonies and visited our legislators' offices, sharing her concerns and advocating for a better future. She did not aspire to leadership and never looked for fame. Instead, Chrys selflessly showed up, whenever and wherever she was called.

When she wasn't standing out front, fighting for the rights of others, she was in the background, doing the hard messy work to keep the progressive grassroots engine going.

Chrys cared about community. She helped at the My Project USA warehouse, volunteered at her children's school and supported our immigrant neighbors in sanctuary, with her laughter, love, time and resources. Chrys was a DOER with an incredible heart and she gave with every ounce of her being.

Her sudden death in December 2018 was not only a shock, but a true tragedy that has left a huge void in our community. This award is to honor Chrys and the remarkable person she was, as well as further her legacy in the hope of inspiring others to continue the amazing work she started.

Awards Selection Criteria

Deah's Awards Selection General Criteria:

These awards recognize and honor exceptional individuals who make volunteerism and community service a way of life. Those who exemplify the best in volunteering, a sense of caring and responsibility for others that connects citizens and solves community



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problems. Each award winner must be someone who make selfless and extraordinary contributions, in addition to those associated with their normal job duties, for the betterment of the local community and beyond.

1. Deah's Change Maker of The Year Award:

Specifically, the winner of this award will be an individual who:

- Is a youth, 25 years old or younger;
- Lives in an under-served, immigrant/refugee community and is working hard to save their own people and uplift their neighborhood;
- Gives freely and selflessly of their time to community activities;
- Inspires others to serve and acts as a role model;
- Has started or significantly contributed toward an initiative in their neighborhood/community that would positively impact the lives of others in a significant way.

2. Deah's Excellence in Community Service & Leadership Award:

Specifically, the winner of this award will be an individual who:

- Goes out of their immediate circle and neighborhood to help the under-served, immigrant/refugee community, Improves the lives of others;
- Has assumed the leadership role in managing a community service project/initiative or played a significant role in managing a part of a larger project for a minimum of six months;
- Has built a team of volunteers to grow and sustain the initiatives;
- Has positive feedback from their team members;
- Gives freely and selflessly of their time to community activities;
- Inspires others to serve and acts as a role model;
- Has a positive impact upon the direction and success of other community projects, programs or individuals;

3. Deah's Community Service Award:

Several awards will be given in this category. Specifically, the winners of this award will be individuals who:

- Are 25 years old or younger.
- Have worked hard throughout the year to support a community initiative in any under-served, immigrant/refugee community;
- Give freely and selflessly of their time to community activities;
- Inspire others to serve and acts as a role model;

4. The Chrys Gee Activist Award:

Specifically, the winner of this award will be an individual who:

- Is over the age of 18.
- Has worked hard throughout the year to support initiatives in under-served communities;
- Helps with political campaigns or grassroots organizations to bring about positive social change;
- Gives freely and selflessly of their time to community activism;
- Inspires others to serve and acts as a role model;
- Goes out of their immediate circle and neighborhood to serve as an active ally to marginalized communities.



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Nomination Process

1. Family, friends, employers, teachers and community members can nominate an individual. An employee cannot nominate their employer.
2. MY Project USA Awards 2019 Nomination Online Form must be filled for each nominee.
3. **All forms must be submitted by online 8:00 pm, Friday, February 15th 2019.**
4. The Nomination Form is available at www.myprojectusa.org/award-nominations.