

Youth Initiative Award

Adelynn Cherry, nominated by Cheryl Sychantha and Tricia Cherry, for her work as a student volunteer with the 4:04 Foundation, where she has written dozens of handwritten letters included in care packages for children and teens grieving the loss of a sibling, parent, or caregiver, offering comfort, empathy, and connection through words shaped by her own experience with loss and demonstrating quiet compassion, resilience, and a deep commitment to helping others feel less alone.

Alicia “Ali” Clark, nominated by Deborah Reschke, for her work as a Library Volunteer Greeter at the Williamson County Library in Franklin, where she has contributed more than 150 hours annually since joining the volunteer program at age 15, serving as a reliable and welcoming presence at the Greeters Welcome Desk every Sunday while balancing school, sports, and other volunteer commitments.

James “Finn” McConnell, nominated by Ondrea Johnson, Missy Brookover, and Suzanne Kreps, for his work as a student and volunteer, contributing more than 100 hours annually throughout high school and raising over \$60,000 for the Last Minute Toy Store since beginning his involvement at age 11, while consistently giving his time and leadership to organizations including Sister Cities of Franklin and Williamson County, 4-H of Williamson County, and numerous local nonprofits, demonstrating initiative, reliability, and a servant’s heart well beyond his years.

Gavin Thier, nominated by Youth Leadership Franklin, for his work as a student leader through multiple initiatives. Gavin, a Youth Leadership Franklin alumnus, has demonstrated leadership through service, education, and civic engagement. He has contributed to Franklin Tomorrow’s initiatives, including the Healthy Democracy Roundtable, participated in statewide leadership with Tennessee DECA, led service projects with the Nashville Young Men’s Service League, founded Tennessee Youth Economic Leaders to deliver financial and investment education, and supported global youth through Cash Compass International.

Maddie Black, nominated by Franklin Noon Rotary, for her work as a student and volunteer, has contributed over 222 volunteer hours in 2025 across multiple organizations, including The Miracle Workers Foundation, One-Gen Away, Franklin High School’s National Honor Society, Interact Club, Spanish Honors Society, and Franklin Noon Rotary. She has led service projects, supported community and school events, spearheaded the Franklin High School Interact Club, and served as a Junior Counselor at YMCA Camp Widjiwagan.

Max Sallman, nominated by Bree DeMoss, for his work as an off-site volunteer with Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury, where he has organized fundraising initiatives, supply drives, and advocacy efforts despite age restrictions at build sites. Max independently executed a supply drive, coordinating with the construction team to identify essential tools, creating and promoting the event through a self-produced video, and providing crucial supplies like paint, measuring tapes, and gloves to better serve local families. Through his efforts, he has raised over \$4,000

in donations and participated in a 2024 mission trip to Honduras, demonstrating remarkable initiative, dedication, and a commitment to improving his community and supporting families in need.

Robert “Carter” McHale, nominated by Sherry McHale, for his work with the American Cancer Society and Father Ryan Relay for Life, where he has served as Team Development Leader, Co-Chair of the #1 Student-Led Relay for Life team in the nation, and a member of the National Youth Engagement Team. Carter has raised thousands of dollars to support families affected by cancer, led a team that contributed \$93,000 in 2025, and been recognized for his service and leadership through induction into the Father Charles Strobel Service Society, multiple Principal Awards, and roles as Head Student Ambassador and peer mentor, demonstrating dedication, resilience, and a deep commitment to helping others.