



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

21st Century Leaders Announces 2026 Georgia Youth Leadership Award Honorees

*21 High School Students Recognized as Georgia's Emerging Leaders; Awards to Be Presented at
Be the Inspiration Gala on March 21*

ATLANTA, GA (February 13, 2026) – 21st Century Leaders (21CL), Georgia's premier youth leadership and workforce readiness nonprofit, today announced the 21 high school students selected for its 2026 Georgia Youth Leadership Awards (GYLA). The honorees—representing communities from DeKalb to Coffee to Pickens counties—will be celebrated at the organization's annual *Be the Inspiration Gala*, presented by Warner Bros. Discovery, on Saturday, March 21, 2026, at Zoo Atlanta.

Each year, 21CL recognizes 21 exceptional students who demonstrate outstanding leadership, service, and impact in their schools and communities. This year's awardees include nonprofit founders, entrepreneurs, advocates and volunteers who embody the organization's core values of resilience, inclusion, innovation and service. The students were selected by a 23-member committee of business leaders, 21CL board members, corporate volunteers, alumni and student peers.

Serving more than 2,750 students annually, 21CL connects Georgia's high school students with year-round leadership development, career exploration and mentorship opportunities. The Georgia Youth Leadership Awards highlight the transformative impact of these programs and the students who are already leading change across the state.

2026 Georgia Youth Leadership Award Honorees

(Listed with their coach/mentor)

1. **Eunchan Choo**, Columbus High School (Muscogee County); coached by Johnny Nguyen, Atlanta Police Department
2. **Reese Davis**, Pickens High School (Pickens County); coached by Assi Van Bastelaar, Atlassian
3. **Blake Davis**, The Galloway School (Fulton County); coached by Bre Pittman, Sage
4. **Utshaho Gupta**, Atlanta International School (Fulton County); coached by Dr. Adriane Randolph, Kennesaw State University
5. **Taylor Harper**, Charles R. Drew Charter School (DeKalb County); coached by Whitney Deal Marshall, Whitney Marshall Coaching
6. **Kareem Hassan**, Lakeside High School (Columbia County); coached by Marty Fleischmann, Masters Team Ventures

7. **Josie Herren**, Berrien High School (Berrien County); coached by Ashley Lee, The Coca-Cola Company, 21CL Board of Directors
8. **Keauna Holloway**, Kendrick High School (Muscogee County); coached by Lanita Lucas, Aflac
9. **Kezia Kotey**, DeKalb Early College Academy (DeKalb County); coached by Martha Revelo, DeKalb County Government
10. **Mami Masoka**, Howard High School (Bibb County); coached by Mary Walker, Invesco
11. **Levi McCoy**, Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School (Richmond County); coached by Dr. Brandon Morgan, Iconic Orthodontics, 21CL Alumnus
12. **Dominic Mimbang**, Coffee High School (Coffee County); coached by Matt Westmoreland, Atlanta City Council
13. **Justan Mosley Jr.**, Allatoona High School (Cobb County); coached by Hassim Diallo, JP Morgan
14. **Marleigh Robinson**, Westlake High School (Fulton County); coached by Maranie Brown, BlackRock, 21CL Board of Directors
15. **Samadhi Salgado**, Emanuel County Institute (Emanuel County); coached by Tiffany Reed, Purpose Possible
16. **Aadi Shah**, Innovation Academy (Fulton County); coached by Pranav Dhingra, Equifax, 21CL Board of Directors
17. **Omer Shoaib**, Brookwood High School (Gwinnett County); coached by Juan Mejia, JCM Ventures
18. **Leilanie Singleton**, Woodville Tompkins High School (Chatham County); coached by Paula Lett, Wellstar Health Systems
19. **MyKel Smith**, B.E.S.T. Academy (Fulton County); coached by Mallom Liggon, Warner Bros. Discovery, 21CL Board of Directors
20. **Brooke Smith**, KIPP Atlanta Collegiate High School (Fulton County); coached by Jon Neff, SKL'D, 21CL Board of Directors
21. **Kunyuan Zou**, Lambert High School (Forsyth County); coached by Chandra Farley, City of Atlanta, Mayor's Office of Sustainability & Resilience

Each student will receive a \$500 grant, with one honoree earning the *Warner Bros. Discovery Student Leadership Award* and a \$1,000 grant from the presenting sponsor. Students are paired with distinguished community leaders and Atlanta Business Chronicle *40 Under 40* alumni who serve as their coaches throughout the award season.

Honorees and coaches will gather for a private meet & greet luncheon on Saturday, February 21, 2026, at Emory University's Goizueta Business School.

This year's *Be the Inspiration Gala* is co-chaired by 21CL Board Members Quiana Pinckney and Greg Clay (21CL Alumnus). Event proceeds support 21CL's year-round leadership and talent development programs offered at little to no cost to students.

About 21st Century Leaders:

Since 1989, 21st Century Leaders has empowered more than 20,000 high school students from 95% of Georgia's counties. The organization's mission is to connect, transform, and inspire students from diverse backgrounds to explore careers, embrace leadership, and prepare for the workforce.

21CL is currently accepting applications for its 2026 Summer Leadership Institutes through March 1. Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors may apply for the week-long residential programs, and students of all grade levels may join 21CL at any time through Leadership Connect, the organization's online learning platform.

For more information and to purchase *Be the Inspiration Gala* tickets, visit:
www.21stcenturyleaders.org.

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