



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Colorado Youth Corps Association Honors Champions, Outstanding Corpsmembers**

Youth Corps Awards Ceremony to be Held Monday, Feb. 4, 2013

**Jan. 28, 2013, DENVER, Colo.** – The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) honors its 2012 Champions and Corpsmembers of the Year at the annual Youth Corps Awards Ceremony. The event will be held Monday, Feb. 4 at 8:15 a.m. at the Colorado State Capitol Old Supreme Court Chambers, followed by a celebratory brunch at the Warwick Hotel at 10:30 a.m. Events are open to the public but reservations and payment are required for the brunch; see event details below.

Will Shafroth, counselor to the secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, will be honored as the 2012 Champion for Youth. Colorado State Senator Jeanne Nicholson (Senate District 16) and State Representative Millie Hamner (House District 61) will be honored as Legislators of the Year. Young people representing 10 youth corps from around the state will also be recognized. Christian Ndushabandi, a 2012 Corpsmember of the Year from Mile High Youth Corps-Colorado Springs will be the Youth Speaker and Colorado Deputy Attorney General Bernie Buescher, former Colorado Secretary of State, will be the ceremony's emcee.

"It is such a privilege to honor Senator Nicholson, Representative Hamner, and Will Shafroth, for their ongoing commitment to engaging young people in stewardship of public lands," said Jennifer Freeman, CYCA executive director. "These champions and partners understand that young adults have the power to effect positive change for our environment and communities while working toward solutions to the critical land, water and energy issues facing our state."

CYCA selected Shafroth as the 2012 Champion for Youth because of his leadership at the U.S. Department of the Interior, service on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps Federal Advisory Committee, work on the America's Great Outdoors Initiative, and support for youth conservation corps during his time as executive director of Great Outdoors Colorado. All of these efforts have contributed to the success of Colorado youth corps over the past 15 years and resulted in thousands more young people having the opportunity to serve Colorado while charting a brighter future for themselves.

Senator Nicholson and Representative Hamner are being honored because of their co-sponsorship of HB 12-1032 (Forest Restoration Programs Continuation), which encourages the use of youth conservation corps on forest restoration projects. As a result of HB 12-1032, youth conservation corps will be able to engage more young people on forest restoration and beetle kill projects for the protection of residents, visitors, and our water and recreation resources. Senator Nicholson and Representative Hamner recognize that youth and young adults can serve as assets to our state and make positive contributions.

The work of these individuals has helped hundreds of young people gain jobs, job training, life skills, college scholarships, and high school and college credits.

At the awards ceremony, CYCA will also honor 10 young people from across the state as 2012 Corpsmembers of the Year. They include:

### **2012 Corpsmember of the Year Awards**

- Natalia Anzola, Southwest Conservation Corps-Four Corners
- Karla Cordova, Weld County Youth Conservation Corps
- Danielette Griffin, Mile High Youth Corps-Denver
- Kaia Mann, Boulder County Youth Corps
- Robert Matticks, Western Colorado Conservation Corps
- Christian Ndushabandi, Mile High Youth Corps-Colorado Springs
- Michael Ricci, Southwest Conservation Corps-Los Valles
- Elexia Seng, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
- Parker Temple, Steamboat Springs Community Youth Corps
- Grant Wahl, Larimer County Conservation Corps

“In many cases, these corpsmembers have overcome personal barriers and capitalized on support from their youth corps to serve our state, further their education, learn to work hard, and look toward bright futures,” said Freeman. “We are so proud of their commitment to the state of Colorado.”

#### **Event details:**

Monday, February 4, 2013

Colorado State Capitol, Old Supreme Court Chambers (second floor)

Refreshments – 7:45 am

Ceremony – 8:15 am

Celebratory Brunch – 10:30 am (cost: \$30)

Warwick Hotel, 1776 Grant Street, Denver

Ceremony RSVP & Brunch RSVP/Payment by January 25 to [nweil@cyca.org](mailto:nweil@cyca.org) or 303-863-0603.

#### **About Colorado Youth Corps Association**

The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) is a statewide coalition of 10 accredited youth conservation corps that engage and train youth, young adults, and military veterans on land, water and energy conservation projects. Youth corps is a proven strategy for engaging young people in service to their communities and stewardship of their environment while cultivating valuable skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For more information about CYCA or the statewide youth corps coalition, visit [www.CYCA.org](http://www.CYCA.org).

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