

## Youth of the Year candidate - Meet Alazar

"Little kids are like sponges in the sense that they take in everything they've learned and experienced, to make them who they are today. As a little boy I always felt like I was missing that "something" to make me who I am. And so, I blamed it on my father who left my mom alone to raise my sister and me at a young age. He was never there for me to guide me through times only men could understand. I have never had a father/son moment, something I craved so much when I was young. When I was becoming a young man, I needed him there to teach me how to shave or show me how to tie a tie for my first dance. I had to figure those things out on my own. Because of this missing piece, I would search and look for what I was missing in other people. I was lost. I didn't know who I was. I had no identity and I wanted to be different. I always felt average and never stood out. I felt bland and for that I started to resent my father.

Eventually as I grew older, I started to realize the kind of person I wanted to be. I did not need a father to help me find out who I am because I have a mother. A mother that works tirelessly every day and gives me more love and advice than I could ever ask for...and for that I am truly grateful. Now I have realized that I am the one who decides my path. Frankly, I am glad my father was not in my life because I might not be who I am today. I do not feel like I need to fill that void anymore.

When I started working for the Boys & Girls Club through the Workforce Development program, I encountered kids just like me. It's because of my time here that I know helping guide kids is something I want to do in the future. I plan to attend college next year to pursue becoming a teacher, to help kids find their own path. Our world will only be as bright as our future is and kids are our future...I want to be part of making the future bright. I feel like I got really lucky finding the Boys & Girls Club. I don't think I will ever find another job that cares about my success more than the Club does."