

National Association of the Deaf

Contestant Application Packet

Deadline: February 1, 2020



YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



• Visibility • Innovation • Sustainability

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF THE NAD?

National Association of the Deaf (NAD) wants one aspiring deaf and hard-of-hearing leader to become the Youth Ambassador for two years. This is an exciting opportunity for young deaf and hard of hearing adults to become the future leaders of the community.

Youth Ambassador is expected to:

- Represent the NAD and the deaf and hard-of-hearing population at events
- Promote civic engagement and social responsibility
- Transform into effective advocates
- Demonstrate teamwork and collaboration
- Engage in networking for the community
- Lead community-based projects
- Raise awareness about social issues
- Translate innovation into action
- Commit to making an impact in American society

In addition, during their term, the Youth Ambassador will:

- Serve as a liaison between the YAP and the NAD
- Commit to volunteer service, including working on their winning project
- Attend and participate in the NAD events (i.e. Jr. NAD National Conference, NAD Leadership Training Conference, Youth Leadership Camp) and other events
- Participate in interviews
- Provide workshops and presentations
- Provide written reports and/or video updates
- Continue to work on their platform project

These opportunities await you and we look forward to having you as our Ambassador!

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

For application considerations, the following eligibility requirements must be met in order to proceed with the application process:

- I. **U.S. Citizenship**—you must be a legal citizen and resident of the United States. You must submit two (2) of the following documents:
 - a. A copy of your current U.S. passport;
 - b. A copy of your current U.S. driver’s license; or
 - c. A copy of your birth certificate
- II. **Age**—you must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to thirty (30) by the due date of the application. Anyone who is younger than 18 or over 30 after the due date of the application will not be considered in this competition.
- III. **Academic Status** - you must be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate by the time of the Youth Ambassador Program competition.
- IV. **Deaf or hard of hearing status**—you must be deaf or hard-of-hearing to be considered in this competition. You must submit an audiogram signed by a certified health professional, showing evidence that you are deaf or hard of hearing in both ears prior to the Youth Ambassador Program competition.
- V. **Communication skills**—the preferred method of communication is American Sign Language (ASL).
- VI. **Physical and mental health**—you must be in good physical and mental health. With the fast-paced nature of this competition, you will have to be prepared to deal with various physical and mental activities. Additionally, to participate at the NAD Retreat and Competition, you must have current health insurance.
- VII. **Representation**—you must not represent another organization during the competition except to represent sponsors supporting you for this competition. If you are chosen to be our NAD Youth Ambassador, you must represent NAD only and also may not endorse any products or company during this two-year representation.

- VIII. **Background check**—you must never have been convicted of any felony crime or any other criminal conduct that demonstrates moral turpitude. The NAD will conduct background checks to investigate.
- IX. **Availability**—you must be willing to travel to the location of Biennial NAD Conference for two weeks – first, for the retreat a week prior the conference and second, for the conference itself. Usually it is during the end of June and beginning of July. Please visit [NAD.org](https://www.nad.org) for more details of the next Biennial NAD Conference.
- X. **Expenses**—you must be able to identify your sponsor or financial support by Round Two. All travel and accommodation expenses for the competition will be the sole responsibility of the contestant. Without any sponsorship or financial support by Round Two, this application will not be considered.
- XI. **Membership**—you are required to be a member of the NAD by Round Two. Please visit <https://www.nad.org/join/> and sign up to become a member.
- XII. **Contestant Agreement Packet**—you must complete and sign all the agreement forms and waivers by Round One. Without the signed agreement forms, this application will not be considered.
- XIII. **Visibility – Innovation – Sustainability**—you must be eager, passionate, and proactive about addressing a **social issue, business idea or a startup business** in the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in United States. Be original. Be creative. Be unique.
- **VISIBILITY**—What have you noticed in our community that needs to be addressed? What kind of issues do you see? What kind of new ideas can you bring to our community to make a change?
 - **INNOVATION**—Bring your new ideas of addressing the issues you see and present it to the community. Bring a creative way to address those issues.
 - **SUSTAINABILITY**—Your idea will not just be presented, but you will make it happen! How can you make it happen and make it last? How can your idea ensure that there is stability?
- **Completed Application**—your application will be considered if you submit the following checklist:
 - ROUND ONE**
 - Completed Application
 - YAP Eligibility Form

- Media and Video Release Form
- U.S. Citizenship
- Audiogram
- A copy of Health Insurance card
- Sponsorship Verification
- NAD Membership

DETAILS OF EACH ROUND AND TIMELINE

There are 5 rounds to go through to reach to the final YAP competition night. Each round will be evaluated and scored by judges and YAP committee based on the rubrics.

The following rounds are:

- Round 1: Eligibility and Application
- Round 2: The VISION Board Challenge
- Round 3: Hot Seat Interview and Observation
- Round 4: Pitch and Community Tank
- Round 5: The VISION Platform

Contestants are encouraged to have a mentor from the beginning of YAP competition. This can be arranged by NAD YAP committee.

ROUND **1**

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION **Timeline: September – February**

During this round, the applicants are encouraged to check the eligibility list to make sure that they are eligible to be in the competition. Then, they are encouraged to explore sponsorships/funds as well as learning more about what you can offer for NAD as a potential Youth Ambassador. We also encourage participants to reach out to state association/ local organizations for support by representing them. Applicants also will have their opportunity to promote their social change idea by creating an audition video. Any questions are welcome and please ask away.

Applicants must submit a completed application as follows:

- Eligibility Requirement Form
- Sponsorship or Financial Support
- NAD Membership
- An high-resolution headshot photo (for the purpose to use on website and newsletter if chosen to move on next round)
- Short Essay Application
 - Applicants must type their responses to answer three (3) questions on the application.
- Two-Minute Video Clip (as describe below)
 - Applicants must submit a two-minute video clip signed in ASL with English captions on a current social issue that he/she is passionate about. The video must include: (1) a brief biography about self, (2) an explanation about how the chosen social issue or new business idea

- impacts the deaf and hard of hearing community; and (3) an example of how the applicant would address the social issue.
- The video must be uploaded in a YouTube link – make sure it is unlisted so we have access to the video while screening.

Screening Process: The YAP Committee and NAD Youth Program Director will review the eligibility forms as well as conducting the background check to ensure that they are eligible before viewing their audition videos. The videos will be reviewed and screened based on meeting three (3) competition criterion, showing appropriate content, and abiding the general expectations.

Prizes: No prizes will be given. Applicants who make to Round Two will be notified by e-mail.

Final Due Date: February 1, 2020

BONUS POINTS: If applicant submit the completed application with audition video 15 days earlier (January 15th), they will earn an additional 2% for their final score for the screening process.

ROUND 2

THE VISION BOARD CHALLENGE Timeline: February – April

Contestants will be given a challenge to complete within one month in their surrounding community. The contestants will seek solutions to the challenges by using Vision Board along with some research activities for their project. The YAP Committee will inform you more about the challenge after you have met the criteria in Round One.

Score: Contestants' Vision Board will be reviewed and determined by a Head Judge. They will provide feedback and rate the quality of Vision Board. Top contestants will move to the next Round 3 and they also will receive feedback. They are encouraged to review the feedback and take the suggestions to strengthen their VIS. They are also required to complete their VIS Pitch/ Power Point for the Finals before the NAD YAP retreat.

The selected contestants will also expect to attend the NAD YAP Retreat (June 27 - July 1, 2020) and the NAD Conference (July 1- 5, 2020).

Prizes: The finalists of Round Two will receive complimentary tickets to enter the NAD YAP Finals at the NAD Biennial Conference. They still are responsible for raising their own funds to attend the conference including flight or other transportation, hotel lodgings, and food. Also, the top finalists will be promoted on NAD website and social media venues.

Final Due Date: April 1st

BONUS POINTS: *If contestant has completed this challenge 15 days earlier (March 15th), they will earn an additional 2% for their final score for the scoring process.*

ROUND 3

HOT SEAT INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION Timeline: During the NAD Conference Week

There are two parts in this round – 1) Hot Seat Interview and 2) Observation. Contestants are expected to use various skills in areas such as advocacy, marketing, leadership, and conflict resolution. As well, how the contestants present and have the comfortable ability of interacting with others. This round will occur during the NAD conference.

PART ONE: HOT SEAT INTERVIEW—this is known as private interviews with selected judges. Contestants will have a private interview with the judges on a scheduled time/date. This interview gives contestants an opportunity to explain about their VIS and their idea of how to address their social issues as well as how you present your idea.

PART TWO: OBSERVATION—this portion is when the selected judges who will observe contestants' interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication, presence, and social etiquette. This is a good way for judges to observe how contestants present themselves as well as sharing their VIS idea. Also, they need to present various skills including advocacy, leadership, marketing, presenting, and conflict resolution. Observation will be conducted throughout the NAD conference week. This also will emphasize the importance of how the contestants present, have the ability to interact

with others and their efforts on teamwork and collaboration. In addition, the contestants will NOT know who the judges are until at the final night of the competition.

Score: For Part 1 (Interview), there will be two (2) judges (the Head Judge and an additional judge) interviewing the contestants. For Part 2 (observation), three secret judges will be interacting with the contestants throughout the week. The rubrics of this round will be shared during the retreat week.

ROUND

4

PITCH AND COMMUNITY TANK

Timeline:

During the YAP Competition Night (July 3)

This round focuses on persuasive and public presentation skills. Contestants must create an elevator pitch video (30 seconds) to share their VIS so the audience can learn quickly about their VIS. During the evening, the contestants will interact with the audience and share their idea. On the night of competition, the audience will meet with the contestants to learn about their ideas. After the pitches, the contestants will be challenged to answer the questions on the stage from the community. The community members will write their questions and put them in the fishbowl during the week prior the competition night. Contestants will randomly pick 2 questions from the fishbowl and must respond to the questions within 2 minutes right on the spot. Then the audience will have the opportunity to vote for the contestant that delivers the best presentation.

Score: The audience will have the opportunity to vote for the best potential Youth Ambassador. The score from audience will contribute 25% to the score along with the judges' scores. Top 3 contestants will be announced live and will move on to Round 5. The rubrics for this round will be shared during the retreat week.

ROUND 5

THE VISION PLATFORM

Timeline: During the YAP Competition Night

Only three of the contestants will move to Round 5. Top 3 contestants will participate in this round. This round is where the contestants will show their overall performance on their passion towards their VIS. This round will require the contestants to use visual media or theatrical-visual performance to express their vision plan for working on the social issue, business idea or a startup business over the next two years.

Score: Five judges (including the Head Judge) will score on a set of qualities based on the program's objectives. The rubric for this round will be shared during the retreat week. One Youth Ambassador will be announced on the stage, in front of a live audience!

Prizes: \$8,000 and title of the Youth Ambassador will be given to the top winner; \$2,000 will be given to the Runner-Up

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Why Professional Code of Conduct?

Many organizations have their own professional code of conduct that outlines the proper, professional, and ethical practices within and outside the organization. The NAD expects that the contestants abide by and respect the Professional Code of Conduct as they are demonstrating the vision, mission, and goals of the Youth Ambassador Program (YAP).

As a YAP contestant, you are representing deaf and hard-of-hearing people of your community and competing for a high-profile role at the national level. The NAD emphasizes that the rules are NOT made to be broken, but are laid out to serve as guidelines and to ensure fairness to all contestants from the beginning of the application process to the end of the competition.

Every individual has a unique perspective and so is yours. Your personal perspectives and opinions reflect on how you behave. You, as one of the contestants, will become a public figure and you need to know what is appropriate and inappropriate in public and in private.

The NAD is an equal opportunity organization that embraces diversity and inclusiveness as core values in achieving its mission. It is the philosophy of the NAD that diversity encompasses a wide range of human abilities, perspectives, languages, cultures, races, genders, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disabilities, and socioeconomic status (www.nad.org). The NAD does not tolerate any form of disrespectful behaviors and discrimination.

Professional Code of Conduct

The NAD Professional Code of Conduct serves four purposes:

- identifies the mission and vision of the YAP that contestants are expected to demonstrate.
- describes the professional behaviors and expectations that contestants are to follow.
- refers as a guideline that contestants are responsible to consult when professional conflicts arise.
- serves as a guideline that the YAP and the NAD can use for disciplinary procedures and consequences for any violations.

PURPOSE ONE—Mission and Vision

Mission—Transforming aspiring young deaf and hard-of-hearing leaders into innovative advocates through a collaborative community-based competition.

Vision—Developing civic engagement and social responsibility among young deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals through challenges that emphasizes on visibility, innovation, and sustainability known as VIS.

PURPOSE TWO—Professional Behaviors and Expectations

I. **Illegal Activities**—you must not be engaged in any illegal activities such as drug trafficking; human trafficking; drinking under influence; underage drinking; gambling; or any other activities that violate the law. An act committed in violation of a law will result the disqualification of your participation in the Youth Ambassador Program.

II. **Insubordination**—you must not be insubordinate from the beginning of your application to the end of the competition by turning in paperwork and videos late; showing up late for the activities; not actively participating in activities; using phones/pagers in activities; not showing up in activities; demonstrating inappropriate affections like fondling and overt kissing; and, any other insubordination that disrupt the program. An act of insubordination will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with Youth Programs Director.

III. **Disrespectful behaviors**—you must not be disrespectful by expressing any form of discrimination; making any offensive or racial slurs; swearing or cussing to others; causing abuse or harm to others; engaging in or encouraging bullying and cyber-bullying; posting inappropriate pictures or comments in social media; and any other behaviors that demonstrate disrespect to others. Any form of disrespectful behaviors will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with Youth Programs Director.

IV. **Misrepresentation of Youth Ambassador Program**—you must not misinform about the YAP; sharing confidential or false information about the program in general; or engaging in any other activities that can harm the image of the program. Any form of misrepresentation will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with Youth Programs Director.

PURPOSE THREE—Guidelines for Contestants

You, as one of the contestants, are responsible:

- to review and understand all professional behaviors and expectations as stated

in the Professional Code of Conduct;

- to familiarize with the standards, rules, and laws;
- to consult with Youth Ambassador Program if you experience a behavioral dilemma;
- to report and communicate with Youth Ambassador Program when you may think that you violate any rules or laws; and
- to demonstrate a great role model with integrity and professionalism.

Contestants are required to sign a contract to confirm that they understand and will adhere to the expectations of the Professional Code of Conduct.

PURPOSE FOUR—Guidelines for the NAD

- The NAD and YAP will consider all factors involved when a contestant violates the rules.
- To ensure that standard disciplinary measures are followed, a system has been developed to guide through disciplinary procedures. This system rates different violations at varying levels of severity and outlines the disciplinary action for each violation. Varying levels include:
 - *Illegal activities*—immediate disqualification of your participation in the Youth Ambassador Program
 - *Insubordination, disrespectful behaviors, and misrepresentation of Youth Ambassador Program*—immediate disciplinary meeting with Youth Program Coordinator that may result in three different levels: (a) verbal warning—an opportunity for you to review the Code of Conduct and understand that you cannot repeat the violation; (b) a written warning—depending on circumstances, the Youth Programs Director will give you a written warning, followed by a verbal warning; (c) immediate disqualification of your participation in the Youth Ambassador Program after repeated misconducts.
- For each rule infraction, the Youth Programs Director will meet with you to address the violation. You will get a written incident report which both of you will sign at the end of your discussion on the nature of the violation.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Name Preferred: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-Mail: _____

Videophone Number: _____

Facebook (optional): _____

Twitter (optional): _____

Instagram (optional): _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Citizenship of Country: _____

Are you (choose one):

Deaf Hearing Hard of Hearing DeafBlind DeafDisabled

Gender: _____ Martial Status: _____

Preferred Pronouns: _____

Name of High School: _____

Year of High School Graduation: _____

College(s) Attended (or will attend): _____

Year of College Graduation: _____

Major: _____ Degree: _____

Current Occupation: _____

Future Career Goals/Plans:

List Scholarships, Awards, and/or Honors that you have received:

List organizations of which you are a member:

Your Hobbies and/or Interests:

APPLICATION ESSAY: Do you want to be the NAD Youth Ambassador? Prove it.
(Your answers must be typed; up to 300 words for each question)

1. Where do you see yourself in the next five years in terms of life goals/ career?
2. What or who inspired you to apply for this program?
3. What is your biggest accomplishment?
4. How would your family and friends describe your personality?
5. Tell us more about what we should know about you!

AUDITION VIDEO: Show who you are and present your VIS.

- Create a two-minute video clip signed in ASL with English captions that focus on three aspects: (1) a brief biography about self, (2) an explanation about how the chosen social issue impacts the deaf and hard of hearing community, and (3) an example of how the applicant would address the social issue.
- The video must be uploaded in a YouTube link – make sure it is unlisted so we have access to the video while screening.

AGREEMENT

ELIGIBILITY

I hereby acknowledge that:

1. I have read, and I meet and agree to be bound by the Eligibility Requirements;
2. I have answered the previous questions honestly, accurately, and without omission;
3. If any of the above information is found to be false, inaccurate, misleading or incomplete, I understand this will be ground for my dismissal from the Youth Ambassador Program process as well as any other legal or appropriate remedies being pursued by the NAD; and,
4. All decisions by NAD and YAP concerning the selection of the contestants are final and not subject to challenge or appeal.

CONTESTANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

I hereby acknowledge that I am expected to:

1. Demonstrate professional behavior and respect with dignified attitude (1) from the beginning of Round One to Round Five of the YAP competition; (2) Retreat; and (3) NAD Conference and Competition;
2. Maintain professional behavior and respect with dignified attitude throughout the reign if I am chosen to be the Youth Ambassador.
3. Represent my sponsorship in an excellent, exceptional, and exemplary fashion;
4. Display an acceptable moral and ethical character; and
5. Comply and obey the laws and rules (i.e., drinking age).

CONTESTANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____

MEDIA AND VIDEO RELEASE AGREEMENT

I hereby acknowledge that:

1. I grant Public Relations from National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and Youth Ambassador Program (YAP) the permission to publicize me in any form of publicity (website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and newsletter).
2. I grant NAD and YAP the permission to take photos and videos of me during the Competition and Conference.

3. I grant NAD and YAP the permission to document my name in media.
4. I grant NAD and YAP the permission to interview me for media purposes.
5. I must get an approval from NAD if I can have the interview or have photos taken from external reporters and photographers from other organization.

CONTESTANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Date: _____

ENTRY AGREEMENT

It is mutually agreed upon by and between the NAD and the contestant that the NAD shall have no liability whatsoever to a contestant. The NAD shall have no liability for loss, damage, or injury resulting from any cause to the property of or to the contestant, or for any lost profits, sales, or business opportunities, or any other type of direct or indirect or consequential damages. It is further understood and agreed that all claims against the NAD for any such damage, loss, or personal injury are expressly waived by the contestant and assumed as the contestant's responsibility. Should the contestant nevertheless take legal action for any reason, the contestant agrees to pursue such legal remedies in the State of Maryland only. The contestant agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the NAD, its agents, officers, and employees, from all claims, actions, and suits, including court costs, attorney's fees and other expenses, arising out of the negligent acts or omissions of the contestant. By signing my name, I am stating that I understand and promise to abide the eligibility rules, criteria for selection, and additional requirements in this document.

CONTESTANT NAME (print): _____

CONTESTANT'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

SPONSOR REPRESENTING: _____

Please email your application to nadyap@nad.org OR complete the application form online at www.nad.org/youth/youth-ambassador-program.