

V0712/2015 108 10750 FAX 420047000

OAC YOUTH APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name Carmen Sosa
Phone [REDACTED] Email [REDACTED]
Birth date [REDACTED] Age 18
Home Address [REDACTED] San Francisco Zip 94110
Resident of SF? Yes No SF District you live in (1-11) 9
OAC Seat you are applying for (19 or under or Transitional Age Youth) Either
Occupation [REDACTED] Employer (if any) [REDACTED]
School you will attend in Fall 2015 (if any) [REDACTED]
Other schools you attend or have attended in the past [REDACTED]

After-school, summer, or youth programs you are currently involved in Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco,
Board of Advising Youth at SFPL, YAC - Youth Advisory Council with DCYF
After-school, summer, or youth programs you have been involved with in the past NERT
Exploratorium, Library, BGCSF, Camp Mendocino, Youth Advocacy Day, BAMN (Bay Area Media Network) FEST

Additional optional information:

Race El Salvadoran and Venezuelan Ethnicity Latina
Languages spoken Spanish and English
Sexual orientation heterosexual Gender female

Applicant Signature:

Date 5/7/2015 Applicant's Signature (required) [REDACTED]

(Manually sign or type your complete name. NOTE: By typing your complete name, you are hereby consenting to use of electronic signature.)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

- 1) What communities do you feel connected to and why? How would you represent the diversity of youth in the City and County of San Francisco? (*Examples: Queer, Disabled, Homeless, Teen Parent, Low-Income, Immigrant*). *You are not limited to these choices. Please add your own.*)

As the daughter of immigrant parents, I am familiar w/challenges faced by 1st generation immigrants, especially as they struggle w/the language. We were unable to access homework help & parents, unable to communicate w/service providers. I ended up translating at adult appts, missing out on my own opportunities & obligations. I am low income but have been working w/diverse groups of teens for years. I was always exposed to youth from more diverse backgrounds than what I saw at school. SFPL, I work with youth from economic groups who have different perceptions of work. Yet, at the Exploratorium, the youth rely on this job & the money earned to meet basic needs.

- 2) What special skills, insight and experiences would you bring to this position?

YAC (DCYF) & my work advising the development of teen programs & teen-only space (SFPL), gave me experience collaborating, planning and providing input to city departments around youth programs. I developed my own voice while also advocating for the needs of other youth throughout the city. In Keystone, youth leadership program (BGCSF), I developed my conflict resolution skills. Our charter experienced significant turnover & inconsistent participation which resulted in difficulties establishing consistent priorities & meeting deadlines. I learned to step up & be consistent through transitions, keeping us moving towards our objectives. I am patient & interact well with diverse social groups. I have the ability to form relationships, respect ideas & experiences from individuals from different economic & cultural backgrounds.

- 3) What are some of your past experiences as a participant or leader in youth-focused activities?

I have experienced strong communication at SFPL. Youth receive the agenda at least two days in advance, there are consistent reminders of upcoming events & staff encourage youth to communicate any changes in their schedules. Staff notify youth of all program changes. Unfortunately, with other youth organizations, communication has not been as effective or proactive. It is a drag when we have already started working toward our goal & the expectations are changed in the middle. We have to adapt, without necessarily being consulted. Consistency & access should be priorities. Youth respond more positively when there is constant programming & staff and when expectations are known to them in advance. Accessing programs can be another challenge. Children may have difficulties getting to programs independently, or the cost or safety of transportation exclude others. This is made worse when we stop talking about the supports that do exist. When the MUNI youth pilot program started, applications were available in schools who helped submit & youth knew how to access it. This has changed in the past two years and less youth know where to start.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommender Name **Debby Machold**

Check if recommender will be submitting a separate letter of recommendation

Recommender, please share your insights about the applicant's involvement and leadership in youth programs and their ability to advocate for their community.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SAN FRANCISCO**

May 12, 2015

San Francisco Youth Commission
City Hall, Room 345
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Youth Commission Review Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Carmen Sosa as a representative on the Youth Commission. I met Carmen 10 years ago when I joined the staff at Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco – Columbia Park Clubhouse and have since become her mentor. In the past two years I have seen Carmen blossom and develop her personal voice and advocacy skills which would be a tremendous asset to the work of the San Francisco Youth Commission.

As a child, Carmen missed out on traditional childhood experiences to put family first and take care of her disabled mother. She translated at medical, legal and school meetings/appointments, and took the primary caretaking role of her younger siblings when mom's disability turned into addiction, and her eventual death three years ago. Carmen has never used her experiences as an excuse, and until just one year ago, she didn't realize how extraordinary her choices and behaviors were as she continued to take on personal responsibility at home and leadership roles within her school and community.

As Carmen's voice has developed, she uses it primarily to advocate for others. What started as feeling motivated by what wasn't fair or right has evolved into her ability to identify recommendations and make suggestions. She is able to reflect on what has been significant to her and offer recommendations to other youth groups and adults to improve experiences for all youth.

Carmen has been a member of BGCSF for over 11 years, attended Camp Mendocino for 7 years and served as a Leader In Training (LIT) resulting in numerous awards for her leadership, including Best LIT, Most Professional LIT x3, Red C (2nd highest leadership award available at Camp), and BGCSF's 2015 Citywide Youth of the Year.

In addition to her awards, Carmen has been a member of the Board of Advising Youth at the San Francisco Public Library – guiding the development of teen programming and teen-specific space at the Library, filled multiple leadership roles including President and Vice-President with the Keystone Club – a youth advisory and community service program of BGCSF – and was a member of the Youth Advisory

Council with DCYF. In addition to all of this, Carmen also chose to become NERT certified in case of emergency and has completed CPR and 1st Aid Training. She is an extraordinary young woman who manages multiple commitments within her family, community and school.

Carmen's attention to detail, compassion for others, and ability to manage multiple commitments is advanced beyond peers her age. She is a tremendous asset to brainstorming and planning sessions specific to youth and has developed an amazing talent to tell her story and guide others to finding meaning and motivation within their experiences.

Carmen will be a tremendous asset contributing to ideas, problem solving and prioritizing the needs of youth from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Her compassion for all living beings, regardless of background, and ability to engage with youth from a variety of backgrounds and experiences is evident in her diverse peer group and willingness to solicit ideas from multiple sources. She models engagement and compassion across social and economic categories and offers great insight to the adults involved.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Carmen Sosa as a representative on San Francisco's Youth Commission. If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]