

# Nomination Instructions

## for the Overcoming the Odds Awards



► APPLICATION DEADLINE: **Friday, January 29, 2010**



Student Advocacy's Overcoming the Odds Awards recognize students who have successfully faced serious obstacles to their success in school. The awards honor students in Westchester and Putnam Counties in three categories: Physical/Medical Challenges, Family/Social Issues, Disabilities. The winners are selected by a volunteer Selection Committee and are acknowledged publicly at Student Advocacy's annual Overcoming the Odds Awards Dinner. This fundraising event supports Student Advocacy's work of helping kids in Westchester and Putnam Counties to get the help they need to achieve success.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please complete the attached form. Submissions must be TYPED. We cannot consider other supporting material but you can incorporate comments or quotes from letters of support in your answers on your application. Additional materials are NOT given to the Selection Committee. The completed nomination must be no longer than three pages.

**COMPLETE THE APPLICATION:** Many nominations are screened out because there is not enough information about the student. Typically, at least *half* of all nominations are screened out because the information is too vague or weak.

### Here are some tips to strengthen your nomination:

- Write for a lay audience explaining technical terms, e.g., *this student has a medical condition called \_\_\_\_\_ which affects this child in these ways \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Be specific about the obstacles that this student has overcome. It can be helpful for the Selection Committee to understand the challenges that occur in a "typical" day. Try to explain what the student goes through to learn.
- Don't assume that the committee members can infer the impact. Rather than simply writing that the student is deaf, explain that a deaf child may be attempting to read the teacher's lips, follow a classroom discussion, and take notes. Explain that each task is challenging enough for a deaf child and that in combination, they can be overwhelming.
- If the student has taken extra steps or done extra work to keep pace at school, describe the student's effort.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Students who were nominated in prior years and did not receive the awards can be nominated again. Since the Selection Committee is considering nominations for students of all ages, they may be considering a nominee who is a senior and has only this year to receive the award versus a younger student who could be nominated again next year. Therefore, for younger students, please explain why the student deserves the award at this time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Nominations are confidential. The information is used ONLY for selection of the award winners. If a student is offered the award, the student and his/her family has the opportunity to review the nomination and eliminate information which they wish to keep private.

**SCREENING PROCESS:** The screening and selection process takes several weeks. A Selection Committee primarily composed of community volunteers selects three winners. One winner is selected by our staff. The nominator is notified of our decision. All students nominated receive a certificate for overcoming the odds. Students who are offered and accept the award must attend a dinner at which the award is presented. The student winner, two guests and one representative from the district attend the dinner as guests of Student Advocacy.

*Good luck with your nomination!*

# Nomination Application

for the Overcoming the Odds Awards



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Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
District and School \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_  
School Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address \_\_\_\_\_  
How do you know this student? \_\_\_\_\_

**Provide your answers to the questions below in no more than 3 pages.  
Please read the instruction page for tips on writing a successful nomination.**

**1. Information about the Student's Obstacle.** Check off one or more of the 2009 Award categories:

PHYSICAL/MEDICAL CHALLENGES     FAMILY/SOCIAL ISSUES     DISABILITIES

Please explain the obstacle(s) the student faced, so that the reader can appreciate its challenges.

**2. Impact on Learning/Education:** How have these obstacles made it more difficult for this student to attend and succeed in school?

**3. Student's Effort to Overcome the Odds:** Describe the effort and achievement made by this student in overcoming the odds. Describe personal efforts, additional help sought and utilized and efforts to then serve as a role model/helper for other students.

**4. Why does this student deserve the Overcoming the Odds Award?**

## ▶ SUBMISSION METHODS

**FAX:** 914-347-6382

**EMAIL:** StudentAdvocacy@StudentAdvocacy.net

**MAIL:** Student Advocacy, 3 West Main Street, Elmsford, NY 10523

*If you do not receive confirmation that we have received your nomination, please call Lois at 914-347-7039 x100.*