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Bhutan Youth Development Fund

President: Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Tseyring Pem Wangchuck

Founding philosophy:

This award is founded to honour the love that our monarchs have for our youth. This award is also to remind our youth of the important role that they play in the development of our country.

Background:

Inspired by the vision and foresight of the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Golden Youth Award camp is expected to inspire youth to do better in life. With the main aim to motivate and reward outstanding students/youth, the winner of the award is given the opportunity to study outside the country in some of the world's prestigious colleges.

In 2005, YDF initiated the idea of the Golden Youth Award Camp to commemorate the 50th Birth anniversary of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo with the aim to motivate and reward outstanding youth portraying excellence in academics, sports, cultural activities, leadership, social contributions and exceptional talents. The first Golden Youth Award Camp was organized formally by YDF in 2008.

Every year, 80 young students (studying in class 10), selected from among the brightest from 20 Dzongkhags gather in Thimphu to compete for the Golden Youth title. The Golden Youth Award winner receives the most prestigious scholarships under the YDF.

2019 is the 12th year that YDF is organizing the Golden Youth Award camp. So far eight GYA winners have availed scholarships to study at the United World Colleges across the Netherlands, Singapore and Canada. The 11th GYA winner will be going to the UWC South East Asia, in Singapore

The camp is designed to accommodate not only the academic excellence of participants, but also other areas of importance in the well-rounded development of youth. Motivational speakers are invited to give talks on educational issues and other topics of interest. Concerted efforts are made to encourage participants to interact and learn from each other. As such, students are encouraged to socialize through activities like jam session, movie nights and camp fire.

Rationale:

The Golden Youth Award is the only award for young outstanding youth in the Country. Bhutan is a small country with 29.2 % of its population aged between 10 to 24 years (PHCB, 2017) and youth are a positive force in society with tremendous potential to participate effectively in the country's advancement and as such development of this large population group is of utmost importance. The Golden Youth Camp is a forum for excellence and an opportunity for young outstanding future leaders to meet, interact and learn from each other.

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Objectives:

1. Set a platform / forum to exchange ideas and perspectives on issues affecting their lives for both rural and urban youth
2. Promote sense of excellence and holistic development of youth
3. Reward the potentials of youth by creating opportunities to learn and explore beyond boundaries

Project details:

The 12th Golden Youth Award Camp will be attended by 80 participants (40 male & 40 female), 8 escort teachers and 30 Y-VIAs. The participants will be the representatives from 20 Dzongkhags who will be attending camp. The Bhutan Youth Development Fund will be providing scholarship to the Golden Youth title holder (1st position holder). YDF will also explore from partners to find out scholarship/training opportunities to runners up and special recognition recipients.

Areas of focus in the camp

- ✓ Academic excellence
- ✓ Literary
- ✓ Talent
- ✓ Games & Sports
- ✓ Innovation lab: Youth and Innovation
- ✓ Social Service (Edutainment)

Conclusion:

The GYA camp met its objectives of recognizing and reinforcing young people with outstanding qualities. The camp also received many positive feedbacks including the need to continue such programs in the future. (Report for GYA 2018 attached for reference).

It was evident that the participants were very motivated during the camp and inspired to become leaders in their own Dzongkhags, become the agents of change and create positive impacts among their peers.

While it is imperative that youth development programs should target disadvantaged youth, it is equally important to encourage and motivate young people who reveal not only academic excellence but also other leadership and social responsibilities in the community. The awards are to a large extent based on social and personal values of the winners and therefore, will also inspire young people to inculcate these values in their daily lives.