



## 2018 Award Nomination Form National Philanthropy Day in Colorado

**\*Please see Nomination Instructions (afpcc.org) for information on completing and submitting nominations**

### Nominee Information

#### Nominee

Name: Mountain Vista High School Student  
**Leadership**  
*First* *Last*

Organization: Mountain Vista High School

Address: 10585 Mountain Vista Ridge  
*Street Address* *Apt./Unit #*

Highlands Ranch CO 80126  
*City* *State* *ZIP Code*

Primary Phone: 303-387-1500 Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: [michael.weaver@dcsdk12.org](mailto:michael.weaver@dcsdk12.org) and [ljmiller@dcsdk12.org](mailto:ljmiller@dcsdk12.org)

#### Category of Nomination (please check ONLY ONE)

- Lifetime Achievement
- Outstanding Large Business (Number of Colorado employees \_\_\_\_\_)
- Outstanding Small Business (Number of Colorado employees \_\_\_\_\_)
- Outstanding Foundation
- Outstanding Philanthropist
- Outstanding Professional Fundraiser
- Outstanding Professional Grantmaker
- Outstanding Service Organization
- Outstanding Volunteer
- Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser
- Outstanding Youth (18 and under) (Age at nomination date \_\_\_\_\_)
- Outstanding Youth Group (18 and under)

## Nominator Information

### Submitted/Nominated By:

Name: Lauren Beede  
*First Last*

Organization: Make-A-Wish Colorado

Address: 7951 E. Maplewood Ave. Ste 126  
*Street Address Apt/Unit #*

Greenwood Village CO 80111  
*City State ZIP Code*

Primary Phone: 303-750-9474 Email: [lbeede@colorado.wish.org](mailto:lbeede@colorado.wish.org)

Relationship to Nominee: Director of Community Development, Wish Week contact

If your nominee is not selected, would you like them to be notified that they were nominated?  Yes  No

If your nominee is selected, can we share a copy of the nomination with them?  Yes  No

### Refer to the Nomination Instructions for Complete Directions

Please remember:

- Each nomination must include:
  1. Nomination Form
  2. Nomination narrative
  3. Two letters of support (additional letters will not be accepted)
- The nomination deadline is **Monday, July 16, 2018 at 5:00 PM (MST)**
- No exceptions!
- All nominations must be complete when submitted
- Complete nominations must be emailed to DeAnn Acosta, CFRE, [deann@afpcc.org](mailto:deann@afpcc.org).

Thank you for supporting National Philanthropy Day in Colorado  
[afpcc.org](http://afpcc.org)



Questions? Contact DeAnn Acosta: [deann@afpcc.org](mailto:deann@afpcc.org)



## 2018 National Philanthropy Day Award Nomination Narrative

### **1. What are the nominee's specific achievements?**

Since 2013, Mountain Vista High School's Student Leadership class has rallied their community to raise more than \$450,000 for Make-A-Wish Colorado through their annual Wish Week, a week's worth of fundraising activities to support wishes for kids with critical illnesses. This year alone, the group donated \$148,000 on behalf of kids like 8-year-old Gabby who is battling a rare form of leukemia and wished to be famous!

The hard work and dedication of Mountain Vista's student leadership group is unmistakable. Throughout the year, the group worked together to plan numerous Wish Week activities including spirit days, restaurant nights, miracle minutes, a dodgeball tournament, a rival basketball game and a Wish Walk. What is even more impressive than the organization and creativity that it took to host these events is the way that the students engaged their community in their fundraising efforts. Several companies supported the week with T-shirt sponsorships and through hosting restaurant nights. Students inspired their middle school and elementary feeder schools to join them in supporting Make-A-Wish. All of the feeder schools participated in some way, either through penny wars, hat days, purchasing Wish Week T-shirts or by supporting restaurant nights. The middle school alone raised nearly \$27,000 and the elementary schools contributed another \$33,000 collectively. Their successes can be attributed to the encouragement and support they received from Mountain Vista High's leadership group. The donation of \$148,000 is a record breaking gift for Make-A-Wish Colorado's student-led fundraising program which is supported by 150 different schools. We often work with schools that raise an impressive amount of money to help fund wishes but this year Mountain Vista's leadership team engaged their community to a level that we have never seen before.

**2. What impact has the nominee had on the community through financial contributions and/or volunteerism?**

Mountain Vista's support allowed Make-A-Wish to grant wishes for 20 Colorado children with critical illnesses. A wish has the unique ability to transform a child and family's life during some of their most difficult trials. When a wish is granted, a child replaces: fear with confidence, sadness with joy, anxiety with hope. Mountain Vista High's Student Leadership group helped to create opportunities for hope and the ability to experience life beyond illness for 20 wish kids and their families.

In addition to the wishes that the group funded, the leadership team helped kick off Gabby's unforgettable weekend of being famous. What did being famous mean to Gabby? It meant signing autographs, taking pictures with her fans, walking around with her entourage and having her own bodyguards. Beyond that, fame brought something to Gabby that cancer had taken away. According to Gabby, being famous gave her and her family a chance to "focus on the good stuff instead of the scary stuff." The students at Mountain Vista treated Gabby as a VIP, from interviewing her on the student-run talk show to throwing a massive dance party and concert in the school gym. Without a doubt, the students brought out "the good stuff" and watched Gabby's wish come true before their eyes.

**3. What leadership qualities does the nominee possess that promote philanthropy and/or volunteerism?**

Mountain Vista High's Student Leadership team emphasized involving their entire community in Wish Week 2018. They successfully led and inspired companies, restaurants, feeder schools and individuals to join them in their fundraising. Specific leadership qualities include exceptional communication and organization skills, creativity, commitment and the ability to inspire others to action. Additionally, their authenticity and passion for the Make-A-Wish mission helped to motivate others to be generous with their time and resources. The spirit and generosity of this group is unmatched and it is for all of these reasons that the Student Leadership team at Mountain Vista High School is well-deserving of this award.

July 13, 2017

To Whom it May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a recommendation for Mountain Vista Leadership. I have been at Vista for nine years and it has been an absolute joy watching our leadership group grow. I like to think we have as strong a leadership team as any high school in the country.

There are so many things I could talk about. Leadership kids meet students at the doors at 7:00 am throughout the year with a kind word and oftentimes a treat. They spend countless nights and weekends planning homecoming and Wish Week, painting signs and putting up decorations. They plan and execute assemblies and pep rallies, bonfires and dances. And they do all of it with smiles on their faces and kind words on their tongues.

But at Mountain Vista, it all comes down to my favorite week of the year: Wish Week. Two years ago we set a national record, raising over \$90,000. This year we crushed that record, raising over \$120,000! We granted over thirteen wishes! You can imagine the massive amount of work that goes into raising that kind of money. And on top of all the fundraising, our Leadership kids also give one lucky Wish Kid the most amazing week of his or her life. It is truly inspiring to watch 40+ kids come together and work as a cohesive unit, striving for a singular goal.

There are a lot of special kids at Vista, but none (in my opinion) who give their time, energy, and love like our Leadership kids. They are a truly awe-inspiring group of young men and women.

They, along with their sponsor, Mrs. Jaffe, come with my highest recommendation. They deserve any award or accolade that may come their way, even though these are not the reasons they do what they do. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brian Wood  
Math Teacher  
Basketball Coach  
Mountain Vista High School  
[Bdwood@dcsdk12.org](mailto:Bdwood@dcsdk12.org)

June 6, 2017

To Whom It May Concern;

It is truly an honor to write a letter of recommendation for the students of Mountain Vista High School on behalf of Make-A-Wish Colorado. What I have seen happening among the student body at "Vista", as we affectionately call it, is nothing short of miraculous. To fully comprehend what the students at this high school have accomplished, it is necessary to understand what occurred in the fourteen months between December 2015 and February 2017. I think you will soon realize that Mountain Vista High School is most definitely an outstanding youth group.

As a parent of two Vista students, a senior and a freshman, December 2015 was looming like a beacon for our family. After months of acclimating as a freshman and enduring the rigors of college applications, my daughter and our family were ready for a break. So when I sent them off to that last day of school before winter break, I breathed a sigh of relief. It would be short lived. Details quickly emerged of a foiled plot by two students to wreak mayhem and cause bodily harm to the faculty and students at Vista; the arrested plot organizers were students themselves. Panic and unease settled in our students that day.

We returned from that break apprehensive, but determined. Resilient, even. Faculty marveled at how well the students were handling the seemingly unending trail of news, rumors, hearings, and revelations regarding the foiled attack on our school. Three short weeks into the new year, tragedy struck again when a popular teacher and coach of our championship lacrosse team committed suicide. Coach Herman touched so many kids at our school, it seemed we might not recover from this blow. Until Make-A-Wish introduced us to a bald 9 year old cancer survivor named Marlee. Through the Kids For Wish Kids program, Vista was challenged to raise enough money to grant a wish for Marlee, approximately \$7,500. Marlee wanted to give stuffed animals to cancer patients at Children's Hospital. Vista wanted redemption and reprieve and they were resolute that they would raise the money and grant Marlee's wish. They raised \$92,000.

Now fast forward 11 months and while the trials and hearings for former classmates plotting ill will continued, the students were emerging stronger than ever. They just seemed a little prouder, a little more cohesive than before. In every social circle, every school function, the conversation among parents always came back around to the success of our kids in raising such a mind blowing amount of money on behalf of Marlee and Make-A-Wish Colorado. But it could never be replicated; could never be surpassed; could never lift our students the way it did before because our success came from a place of desperate personal need.....or did it?

We soon learned that it wasn't the response to evil and sadness that drives our kids; it's a sense of empowerment that is unparalleled when you release the reins and get out of their way. Our kids chose to, again, give 110% of themselves to one week, seven days of action. They plot. They plan. Students in Leadership who take the helm barely sleep (I should know I have stayed up all night with my daughter, now a sophomore and more committed than ever to her school and leading her classmates). Average is not in anyone's vocabulary during Wish Week. Bigger. Better. More. More time, more energy, more money. Less us, more them; less I need and more I want to give.....2500 students wearing the same tee shirt, a sea of bodies whose chests proudly proclaim "Be A Good Person" and on any given day I am at the school, I see at least ten students still wearing those shirts. So how to do more, achieve more, be more when you set the bar so high? You see, the students set that bar themselves when they raised \$92,000 in February 2016. So it was no surprise to any of the Vista parents when on a Friday in

January, 2017, 2,500 students wearing matching tee shirts started jumping up and down and chanting "I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL WIN!" when it was announced that—together—they raised more than \$127,000 for Make-A-Wish Colorado. They didn't believe that they would win because they are innately winners; they believed that they would win because they believed in something so much bigger: each other.

Stacie Winslow  
Mountain Vista High School Parent