

The interview teams will consider carefully the information given below in evaluating this nomination form. Be thorough in your answers. *Please note that the textboxes will expand as you type.*

1. *Describe your interest in your nomination area.*

From a young age, I was a reader. I adored books of all sorts and flew through the school selection until the teachers had problems providing enough books for me. Occasionally, I received scoldings for reading under the desk, but it was so hard for me to stop. I could not fathom how books, simple compilations of paper and ink, had the ability to make me feel so safe. I knew that even if I was having a bad day, it would be alright because I could go home and escape into another story. Then, I became a writer. I realized how I could take control of the characters and the plots and weave them into whatever my imagination came up with. I still marvel at the power that comes in writing; I do not think I will ever fully grasp how scratches on a page make people see or hear or even feel so much inside of them. In my free time, I posted short stories online in informal contests or exchanged them with friends for fun. I entered high school and took higher level language arts classes in which I realized how much hidden meaning there is throughout the symbols of the classic novels we read. I talked about the books outside of class, wanting to gain insight on how others interpreted various authors' meanings. My reading level increased and I began to transition from reading books which interested me personally to those that are renowned for their significance in literary history. I greatly enjoy analyzing these books to work out what it is that makes them so riveting and impactful. It is one of my greatest ambitions to hone my writing skills so that I might one day write something that leaves a lasting positive influence on its readers.

2. *What have you already accomplished in your nomination area beyond regular classroom work? Write about evidence as described in the "Instructional Description and Criteria for Selection," which is available at the GHP website. If you have questions about the criteria, check with your teacher and counselor for help. DO NOT ATTACH PHOTOS, RESUMES, CERTIFICATES, ETC.*

I have been a part of the Norcross Writing Club since I began attending high school, and I have been elected as Vice President of the club for the past two years. This means that it is my job to "teach" writing lessons to the club on certain days, help edit papers, and compose our final literary notebook. Furthermore, I greatly enjoy being able to help instruct other writers, so I also attended a National Student Leadership Conference last summer where I took a 10 day course focusing on education in primary school language arts. I had the opportunity to learn how to appeal to students with different learning styles, manage a classroom, use various educational technologies, fund a charter school, and even plan a languages arts lesson which I was able to teach to a classroom of my peers. Last year, my science Gateway practice essay received a perfect score and was posted online to be utilized as an exemplary resource for teachers and students.

*3. Why do you feel that you should be selected as a Finalist?*

My interest in communication centers around writing and reading, but also spans to encompass my other interests. I love interacting with different types of people and look forward to those I would encounter if selected to continue on to Valdosta. Additionally, as a Spanish learner, I know firsthand that interpreting foreign language from written word is far easier than translating just by ear, so one of the reasons that I value writing so much is because of the international implications found in its ability to link cultures together. Due to these reasons, traveling is my only passion that rivals my love of writing- I have been to 13 countries in 2 continents and desire to become trilingual someday to better immerse myself in other cultures. I hope be selected to attend this program so that I will be able to learn how to express ideas to people from various backgrounds; likewise, I long to absorb just as much perspective from the ideas of other people. GHP is undoubtedly an ideal learning environment to do just this and I look forward to relishing all of the experiences I might have with the new people I could meet there. I have always enjoyed learning simply for the sake of new knowledge rather than to score a particular grade and I am excited at the prospect of improving my skills in my favorite subject with like-minded people. Finally, I feel that my highly optimistic and outgoing attitude will be appreciated by the other students attending the program.

*4. Have you decided on a career? If so, tell about it.*

I dealt with extreme pressure upon entering high school as I feared that I was falling behind my peers, who all seemed to have their college plans ready and career paths laid out. I constantly felt stressed because I thought about what I wanted to do with my life frequently, and I was upset that I no longer had my favorite language arts teacher from eighth grade. However, it all worked out for the best since it was this longing for my previous teacher that led me to realize that I wanted to be a teacher myself so that I could make a similar impact on young minds. I had trouble deciding between wanting to teach history and language arts, but as I got more involved in writing club and began analyzing books on a deeper level in AP Language Arts, I decided that I want to be a language arts teacher. At the Leadership Conference I attended to learn about education in language arts, I was thrilled to discover how much I enjoy every bit of the job- even the lesson planning. I am unsure if I am more excited at the possibility of helping students realize the inherent power of words and how they allow people to both express their own ideas and shape those of others or at the opportunity to assist and support my pupils as actual people, not as mere numbers in a grade book, just as my favorite teacher did for me.

*5. Make any statement in support of your nomination which you think has not been covered elsewhere on this form.*

I have excelled at language arts throughout all of my years in school. I received exceeding scores in the reading and writing sections of every CRCT I took throughout elementary and middle schools, I was one of seven students in my grade to get a perfect score on my eighth grade Gateway essay, and I received the Persistent Panther language arts award for dedication and passion in the subject during my eighth grade year, which is only given to one student per grade. When my schedule allows, I return to my middle school where I volunteer to help my former language arts teacher with various tasks around her classroom so that I may observe her teaching style and assist any students that need extra help or information pertaining to the high school experience. Outside of language arts, I strive to achieve in other academic areas by taking rigorous AP and IB level courses. I take the National Spanish Exam annually and have received bronze awards both years. However, I endeavor to push myself in all areas of my life, so I am involved in several extracurriculars. I am a highly active member of my school's band programs- I have consistently moved up through the concert band levels until I was admitted into the top band this year, I have participated in marching band for three years and am now serving as section leader, and I annually join the pep band to perform at our basketball games. My love of music carries over to the more athletic areas of my life as well as I am about to enter my fifth year of dance lessons. I also value helping my community around me, so I attended the Random Acts of Kindness club for two years, which works to reward the less-recognized organizations both at school and throughout the community, as well as my church's youth group, at which I now serve as a core member.