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INTRODUCTION

As we stepped into this season, each of us carried a clear vision of our mission. We understood the stakes, knowing that every challenge would shape not just this year but our future. While this understanding doesn't make the road any easier, it deepens our resilience. Staying connected to our purpose gives us the strength to keep pushing forward, reminding us of why we started and why we continue.

This season has been a testament to that resilience, as we've faced challenges head-on and emerged stronger, together. Our journey is shaped not only by the victories and triumphs but by the dedication and contributions of those who support us—both past and present. It's through the collective efforts of our community that we continue to grow, evolve, and inspire the next generation.

Quote of the week

“Just win, baby” Al Davis

CHINO AWARD WINNER

Congratulations to Jason Cedeno, our 6th recipient of the Chino Award in the past 14 seasons. Jason has been a cornerstone of our organization's growth, having been with us since 2011. His dedication continues to empower the youth in our communities, both on and off the field. We proudly celebrate Jason for this well-deserved achievement, and the entire YALD organization extends our heartfelt gratitude for his invaluable contributions.

HONORARY COIN TOSS

The inspiration behind the coin toss idea finally came to fruition. I had the honor of recognizing my mentor, childhood coach, and father figure—Anthony Thompson, affectionately known to many as Coco. A dedicated leader to his alma mater, George Washington High School, his impact reaches beyond the field to the community and his family. As a young man, Coach Coco instilled in me values of integrity, hard work, loyalty, and respect—values that continue to guide me to this day. He gave me his all, and I vow to give it back with interest. Coach Coco, thank you.



AWARDS CEREMONY

This year, the awards ceremony returned to its roots at the Michael J Buczek Ballfield, a place that holds deep significance for YALD. It was the perfect setting to welcome parents, fans, and the entire community, with a special invitation extended to Miguel Guzman's family. In addition to honoring the season's standout performers, we gathered to celebrate and remember the legacy of the legendary Miguel Guzman. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Guzman family for joining us on this memorable day.

The program opened with YALD's founder, Carlos Castellanos, President David Calderon, and Program Director Kelvin Valentin paying tribute to Miguel Guzman. Emotions ran high as former player and current Packers Assistant Coach Rafael Quezada, along with Head Referee Jeremiah McGarvey, shared moving stories about their time with Coach Mickey. Miguel's son, Austin Guzman, delivered a powerful reflection on his father's legacy, leaving a lasting impact on all who were present.

In a fitting tribute, we announced that YALD's championship trophy will now bear his name:

"Miguel Guzman Championship Trophy."



2023 SEASON AWARD WINNERS

- **Sack Leaders -**

Michael Abinader / Jariel Fernandez

- **Most Improved Player**

Naythin Borrome / Ari Banegas

- **Flag Leader**

Ari Banegas

- **Rookie of the Year**

Lincoln Perez

- **Quarterback of the Year**

Dylan Castellanos

- **Offensive Player of the Year**

Jayden Pena

- **Defensive Player of the Year**

Jayden Pena

- **2023 MVP**

Jayden Pena

- **2023 Championship Game MVP**

Dylan Castellanos



SKILLS CHALLENGE

The All-Star Game now proudly features a fan-favorite tradition: the Skills Challenge, where players from all teams get the chance to showcase their talents. The competition includes three main events—YALD's Fastest, the QB Challenge, and the Team Relay Race—each giving athletes a stage to demonstrate their speed, accuracy, and teamwork.



David Benros solidified his status as YALD's fastest with a commanding performance, leaving his competition in the dust and showcasing his unrivaled speed. Having first joined our youth clinic years ago before stepping into the 12 to 17 Flag Football League, David has since become a dynamic force on both sides of the field, making every play a spectacle. His journey from clinic participant to standout athlete is a testament to his dedication and talent.



Elijah Corrales once again demonstrated his exceptional precision, as he has all season, securing victory in the QB Challenge with flawless accuracy. A standout in our program, Elijah began his journey at the age of 7 in the youth clinic, and now, at 15, continues to excel as one of our most dedicated and seasoned participants.



The Packers showcased impressive speed and, most importantly, outstanding teamwork, clinching victory in the team relay race challenge.

ALL- STAR GAME

The All-Star Game honored one of Miguel Guzman's favorite rivalries: Ohio State vs. Michigan. A dedicated Michigan fan, Miguel's passion for the team inspired this year's jersey designs, a tribute to his love for the Wolverines. As players were drafted to their respective teams, the rivalry came alive with intense energy and fierce competition on the field. Both teams showcased remarkable plays, but it was Team Michigan that ultimately triumphed, securing the victory.



All-star game MVP - Nathaniel Platellas



Here are the individuals responsible for the continued success of this organization, acknowledging not only those who are actively involved today but also those from the past whose contributions have shaped our achievements. Our Founder, Carlos Castellanos, made it a point to express his gratitude to all who have supported this mission—whether it was helping write a letter, preparing a budget, attending a game, or even contributing a single dollar. Carlos shared, “I always appreciate what you give, as long as what you give is your 100%. Even if it's just one hour a year, make sure that hour is your absolute best.”

Standing before everyone, Carlos lifts his hat to honor these true heroes of our communities.

Written by: Kelvin Valentin