During the last 23 years, the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation has shared some uplifting and remarkable stories about youth and young adults in our community. This is in contrast to the barrage of negative things we hear about them each and every day. What makes the sharing of these stories most incredible is that they are told about the lives of youth and young adults who are “beating the odds” and finding success, despite facing the daunting conditions in which many of them live.

We are ready to kick off another year in celebrating the lives of these young people. We invite you to help us tell their stories; To share with others how, despite facing some of the most difficult circumstances that even an adult would find hard to overcome, these young people are triumphing through adversity. Help us share how, in the midst of their troubles, such as broken homes, mental, emotional and sexual abuse, homelessness, severe health problems and a multitude of other catastrophic situations, these very youth persevere. They do more than survive; they thrive and make life better for themselves and others by the courage they exemplify. Somehow they find the means to make great things happen and to accomplish even greater things. Seldom do we hear about these young people.

To date, the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation has helped to share the stories of more than 100 youth by honoring them with the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Award. In May (2016) another group of young people will be recognized at the 23rd Annual Memphis “Beat the Odds” Awards Program. The youth recipients will be presented with a monetary award, trophy and other prizes in recognition of their outstanding accomplishments. We will also recognize an adult who has made a positive impact on youth and young adults with the Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award.

We need your help to identify deserving individuals for these awards. Application packets and selection guidelines are enclosed with this correspondence for both awards. To be considered, applications must be postmarked by Friday, March 11, 2016. Please send your application to:

Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation  
Attn: Selection Committee  
P. O. Box 111242  
Memphis, TN 38111

We look forward to receiving your nominations. Thanks in advance for helping to celebrate remarkable youth in our community who have once again beat the odds. For additional information about the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation and the “Beat the Odds” program, call Dr. Theresa Okwumabua at (901) 428-0073, Okwumabuat@gmail.com or visit us at www.memphisbeattheodds.org.

SAVE THE DATE  
Thursday, May 19, 2016 Memphis “Beat the Odds” Awards Program  
- Supporting the positive potential of young people -
Selection Guidelines (Student & Youth Award)
Listed below are guidelines to consider in determining whether to nominate a young person for this year’s award. More than one student may be nominated by an agency.

Nominees should be:

- Enrolled in school or a special training program
- Between the ages of 13 and 21 years
- Maintaining a grade point average showing marked effort, improvement, or success
- Succeeding despite, but not limited to, hardships such as poverty, poor health, disability, homelessness, addiction, personal/family tragedy, cultural/language barriers
- Participating in activities involving, for example, volunteerism, extracurricular school, religious, or civic activities helpful to others
- Achieving non-academic goals within his/her school and/or community
- Not a previous "Beat the Odds" Award Recipient

For additional information about the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation and the “Beat the Odds” program, call Dr. Theresa Okwumabua at (901) 428-0073, Okwumabuat@gmail.com or visit us at www.memphisbeattheodds.org.
Student & Youth Award Nomination Form

Application Must be Postmarked by Friday, March 11, 2016

Please complete the following background information and, under separate cover, describe why you think this student/youth should be honored at the 2016 Memphis “Beat the Odds” Celebration. You may refer to the attached outline of suggested criteria as a guide in completing your application. Students/youth are encouraged to submit their own statement (one page) and respond to a question regarding their contribution(s) to the community (community service). Letters of support from their peers or others who know about their challenges and accomplishments are encouraged as well. In addition, please provide the names of three (3) adults who would be willing to be interviewed by a member of the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Selection Committee about the nominee. These individuals will be contacted regarding the nominee.

Please type or print

Nominee’s Name

Nominee’s Birth date/ Age

Nominee’s Address

City, State, & Zip

Gender ________ Social Security # ________________ Ethnicity ________________

Home Phone Other Phone/ Contact# (Cell) E-mail Address # in Family Family Income (Estimate)

Name of Nominee’s School GPA

Name of Person or Organization Submitting Nomination E-Mail Address

City, State, & Zip

If Organization, Name of Contact Person/ Title/ Address/ Phone # E-Mail Address

Signature of Person Making Nomination

Please give the name and contact information (i.e., telephone numbers – daytime, evening, cell) of three individuals who can be interviewed about the nominee. We will contact these people. Please let them know about your nomination.

(1) __________________________________________________________________________

(Person’s Name) (Daytime #) (Evening #) (Cell) E-Mail Address

(2) __________________________________________________________________________

(Person’s Name) (Daytime #) (Evening #) (Cell) E-Mail Address

(3) __________________________________________________________________________

(Person’s Name) (Daytime #) (Evening #) (Cell) E-Mail Address

Please Mail Application to: Memphis “Beat the Odds” Selection Committee; Attn: Selection Committee, P.O. Box 111242, Memphis, TN 38111. For additional information about the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation and the “Beat the Odds” program, call Dr. Theresa Okwumabua at (901) 428-0073, Okwumabuat@gmail.com or visit us at www.memphisbeattheodds.org.

SAVE THE DATE
Thursday, May 19, 2016 Memphis “Beat the Odds” Awards Program
- Supporting the positive potential of young people -
Student & Youth Award Nomination Form

Tell why you are nominating ______________________________________ for
(Nominee’s Name)

recognition through the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation. Use additional paper if needed.

Application Must be Postmarked by Friday, March 11, 2016

For more information about the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation and the “Beat the Odds” awards program, call Dr. Theresa Okwumabua at (901) 428-0073, Okwumabuat@gmail.com, or visit us at www.memphisbeattheodds.org.

SAVE THE DATE
Thursday, May 19, 2016 Memphis “Beat the Odds” Awards Program
- Supporting the positive potential of young people -
Student & Youth Award Nomination Form

**Student Nominee Comments:** Please respond to the following questions. You may use additional paper if needed but limit each response to one page. Include this response in the application package.

**Question #1:** What difficulties or obstacles have you had to deal with in your lifetime?

**Question #2:** How have you dealt with these difficulties and to what extent do you feel you have successfully dealt with them?

**Question #3:** What are you currently doing or have done in the past year to “give back” to your community? (If you are not currently doing anything or have not done anything in the past year to "give back" to your community, what could you do now to "give back" to your community?) (Community is broadly defined and can include your home, school, church, surrounding neighborhood, the Memphis community, etc.)

**Question #4:** How do you think other youth might benefit or be helped by hearing about you and the difficulties in your life?
Dear Community Constituent:

The Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award will be presented at the 23rd Annual Memphis “Beat the Odds” Award Banquet to be held in May 2016. Beat the Odds, a project initiated by the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) in 1990 and locally, by the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Committee in 1993, focuses attention on the positive potential of young people who are faced with difficulties each day.

Please nominate a caring adult (i.e., a teacher, counselor, mentor, social worker, coach, etc.) who goes the “extra” mile or takes extraordinary measures to help lift young people up and over great odds for the 2016 “Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award.”

Enclosed is a nomination packet, which includes an abbreviated biographical sketch of Cathryn Rivers Johnson, selection criteria and a nomination form. Nominations for this award can be submitted to the Selection Committee at the above address and must be postmarked by Friday, March 11, 2016.

Thank you for your support of youth. We look forward to receiving your nomination(s). If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

The Memphis “Beat the Odds” Foundation
The Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award

(Award Description)
The Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award was established in 1995 by the Memphis “Beat the Odds” Awards Committee as a way to honor and remember Cathryn Rivers Johnson. Ms. Johnson was a loving, kind, humble, dedicated, loyal, spirit-filled, compassionate, vivacious, charismatic, innovative, intelligent, influential, dynamic, resourceful, and motivational person who dedicated her whole life to serving people, especially children. She never met a stranger and was always a positive factor in each life she touched. She served young people through the WDIA Teen Town Singers, where she served as musician, through her employment for 35 years with Memphis City Schools, and through her many church activities at Salem Gilfield Baptist Church. She dedicated time and energy in molding and preparing young people to become productive citizens. Ms. Johnson taught at Booker T. Washington High School for 32 of her 35 years. Upon retirement from the Memphis City Schools, she worked as an educational talent search counselor with Girls, Incorporated.

Do you know anyone who would be deserving of this recognition? If so, please consider nominating him or her for the 2016 Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award. Nominations must be postmarked by Friday, March 11, 2016. Like Ms. Johnson, the recipient of this award must:

• Significantly influence and impact the life of a young person or young adults;
• Provide service to youth and the Memphis/Shelby County community;
• Assist youth in their career development; and/or
• Assist youth in their educational endeavors.


Submit completed application to:
Memphis “Beat the Odds” Nominations Committee
P. O. Box 111242
Memphis, Tennessee 38111
Memphis "Beat the Odds" Recognition
Cathryn Rivers Johnson Award
2016 Nomination Form

Name of Nominee _____________________________________________________________

Address _________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ________________ Zip _________________

Telephone #: ____________(home) _______ (work) __________ (cell) _________ (other)

Place of Employment _______________________________________________________

Title _________________________________ E-Mail: ______________________________

I. Describe how the nominee has used his/her expertise/training, time and/or influence to significantly benefit youth and young adults. Use additional paper, if necessary.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

II. Describe how nominee provides service to youth, particularly in the Memphis/Shelby County (Tennessee) community. What activities, programs, special projects, etc. is this person involved in?

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

III. Describe the impact that the nominee has had as a role model/mentor in the life of a youth and/or young adult during the last five (5) years.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

IV. Describe how the nominee assists with/in the educational endeavors of a young person or people.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
V. Describe how the nominee assists or has assisted a young person or people in their career development.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

VI. Comment on why or how the nominee’s involvement with a youth or young people distinguishes him/her from others who have also worked on behalf of a young person or youth.

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

VII. Please give the name and contact information (i.e., telephone numbers- daytime/evening, cell) of three individuals who can be interviewed about the nominee. We will contact these individuals.

(1) (Name) (Day #) (Evening #) (Cell) (Fax #) E-Mail Address
(2) (Name) (Day #) (Evening #) (Cell) (Fax #) E-Mail Address
(3) (Name) (Day #) (Evening #) (Cell) (Fax #) E-Mail Address

Signature of the Nominator Print Name of Nominator

Address of Nominator __________________________________________________________

City _____________________________ State ________________ Zip ______________

Telephone #: ____________ (home) ____________ (work) ____________ (cell) ____________ (other)

E-Mail Address: ________________________________________________________________

Relationship to Nominee: __________________________________________________________

Submit completed application to:
Memphis “Beat the Odds” Selection Committee
P. O. Box 111242
Memphis, Tennessee 38111