



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT



FIND YOUR VOICE

Get engaged with the important issues that face the state, nation and world. Learn how government works in order to make change happen. Speak your truth and listen with respect while others share theirs.

We welcome students of all backgrounds, opinions, and regions of the state.

ymcayouthvoice.org

Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation



“I feel like YIG has really recharged me. I feel motivated and ready to take action in my own community.”

ABOUT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Since 1946, students throughout Minnesota have gathered at Youth in Government to discuss and debate the important issues facing their communities, experience first-hand how governments function, and use their voice to respectfully advocate for issues that are important to them. 75 years later, being able to speak out and to make change is more important than ever. It isn't enough to **want** change; understanding how systems work strengthens the ability to transform our world to a better, more just place.

This year's conference will include focused discussions on current issues, a wide variety of social events, engaging evening activities, time for small-group reflection, and chances for recognition. This won't be like the average school day – it will be filled with engagement and interaction, in sessions led **by** youth, **for** youth.

YIG is an experience like none other – a fun and immersive four days where students come together to explore ideas, meet new friends from all over the region, find a place where they belong, and leave inspired to take action that makes a difference in their communities.

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE AT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Youth legislators identify state issues important to them, their families, their schools, or their communities and write legislation to bring about change. They present their bills in committee hearings and to the full legislature, and work together to find solutions to some of Minnesota's biggest issues in a format that encourages respect and understanding.

Lower Legislature	Grades 9 & 10
Upper Legislature	Grades 11 & 12

NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM

Each student prepares a proposal on a topic relevant to current events. At the conference, delegates prepare, present, and discuss important national issues with their peers in a forum that is focused on productive, respectful debate.

National Issues Forum	Grades 10, 11, & 12
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LEADERSHIP CORPS

Students work in small groups to create bills, argue court cases, write media articles, and get exposure to all the program areas in order to kick off their Youth in Government careers. During this time, they have the chance to learn about the workings of state government and participate in skill-building and leadership development activities.

Leadership Corps	Grade 8
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JUDICIAL BRANCH

Court members prepare for hearings and make arguments before Youth Judges or Justices. Each student has the opportunity to argue both sides of an assigned case and will have an opportunity to serve on the bench.

Appellate Program – Youth lawyers make legal claims on issues related to citizen rights and responsibilities and application of constitutional law.

Court of Appeals	Grades 9 & 10
Supreme Court	Grades 11 & 12

Trial Program – Youth lawyers make legal arguments in civil or criminal cases in order to determine guilt or innocence or establish legal facts, modeling the experiences of lawyers and judges in real-life court hearings.

Trial Court	Grades 9 & 10
District Court	Grades 11 & 12

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP ROLES

Youth leadership is the core of our programs. Youth in Government is planned and led almost entirely by students. Participants have opportunities to serve as leaders who are elected by their peers or as officials who are appointed to help carry out program functions.

Elected Officers – Candidates stand for election for one of about 20 leadership roles. Those who are elected make a year-round commitment to Youth in Government and to the students they serve. These positions are determined at the end of the conference the preceding year.

Appointed Officials – These students are appointed to specialty roles by the Elected Officers to assist in leading the various program areas. Leading up to the conference, students attend various trainings where they prepare for about their specific roles. The application for these roles closes shortly after Youth in Government.



WHY SHOULD YOU GET INVOLVED NOW?

- **Build skills for the real world**
- **Have powerful conversations on important issues in respectful and mind-opening ways**
- **Meet new people and make friendships that will last a lifetime**
- **Get exposed to students from other parts of the state who have different viewpoints**
- **Learn things you can't learn from a test – critical thinking, professional skills, and leadership**
- **Strengthen resumés and college applications**

CONFERENCE LIFE

CONFERENCE DATES

Thursday, January 6 – Sunday, January 9, 2022

LOCATIONS

Hilton Minneapolis

1001 Marquette Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Minnesota Capitol Complex

State Capitol Building
Minnesota Judicial Center
State Office Building
Minnesota Senate Building

EVENING ACTIVITIES

Youth in Government delegates work hard each day of the program and they get to relax each evening.

Examples of some of the free-time activities:

- Carnival Games
- Leadership Candidate Forums
- Delegate Talent Show
- Issue Discussions

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Keeping students safe is our top priority. We gather YMCA staff, teachers, and volunteers to coach, support, and supervise students throughout our conferences.

- All volunteers undergo criminal background checks
- Each delegation conducts a group check-in meeting nightly
- We hire a security company to staff the sleeping room floors in our hotels each night
- Adult Advisors supervise skyways and restaurants during every meal period

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 AM	Wake up – Breakfast
9:00 AM	Program sessions
11:00 AM	Lunch in the skyways or off-site location
12:30 PM	Program sessions
5:30 PM	Dinner in the skyways
7:30 PM	Evening activities
10:30 PM	Delegation meetings and reflection
11:30 PM	Curfew

MEALS & FOOD

All meals are “on your own” during the conference. Students will have access to a variety of food options for meals in the Minneapolis skyway system or near the Capitol Complex.

Many bring snacks and light breakfast items to eat in their hotel rooms. Skyways, buses, and restaurant areas are supervised by adult advisors. We help students identify healthy food options at the restaurants we patronize.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DRESS CODE

YIG programs promote a trust-based Code of Conduct. We expect that all delegates will conduct themselves in a mature and respectful manner. The Code outlines expectations for conduct and possible consequences for not following those expectations.

During program hours, everyone should be wearing business attire. During evening activities and other personal time, students may dress more casually. The dress code has a wide range of what is considered “business” attire and it is flexible.

The full text of the Code of Conduct (including dress expectations) can be found on the website at ymcayouthvoice.org



“YIG makes me feel like I belong somewhere. It has given me self-confidence. It gives me something I can be truly passionate about. I have met my best friends through the program. It has taught me how to be a leader and a good follower.”

FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who runs the program?

Students are involved in the leadership of YIG in meaningful and hands-on ways; for example, student officers who are elected during the previous program year run conference events. YMCA staff members, teachers, alumni, and volunteers are always present to guide from the side and provide support when needed.

What is a delegation?

Delegations are formed in a school, YMCA, or community group and can vary in size. They are led in partnership by youth and adults. Communications, financial arrangements, and preparation happen at the delegation level.

How does conference prep happen?

Students gather throughout the fall in local groups—called delegations—where they prepare materials for their program areas, listen to speakers, and practice their presentation skills. In October, delegates from all over the state come together for online training called LAUNCH to get ready for the January conference.

What is included in the program fee?

Three nights' lodging, transportation during the conference, security, meeting space rental, evening activities, training and program preparation leading up to the conference, including a virtual LAUNCH training in October.

What is included in the local delegation fees?

These vary by group; see your local delegation director for more info.

How are adults involved in YIG?

Adults have a variety of roles: some lead delegations while others help conduct trainings, raise funds, and manage logistics. At the conference, they fill various roles to help provide a positive delegate experience.

What if I have more questions?

Contact your local Delegation Director to get your questions answered and to learn more about how to participate. For more information, check out the website at ymcayouthvoice.org

“I’ve become much more comfortable speaking up about my thoughts and opinions, especially when they differ from those around me. I have become much more self-sufficient and confident in my abilities.”

HOW TO REGISTER

- Register online at ymcayouthvoice.org
- Each delegation may have a different local fee; paid separately. See the local Delegation Director for specifics
- The completed registration process will secure your place at Youth in Government.

PAYMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| • Program Deposit | Due at registration |
| • ½ of Remaining Fee | Drawn on Credit Card
November 2, 2021 |
| • Final Balance | Drawn on Credit Card
December 7, 2021 |
- **Cancellations may be made until December 1**, when all fees and rosters are final.
 - Cancellations must be in writing and are submitted to the local Delegation Director.
 - If a delegate has a significant discipline issue or violation of the Code of Conduct, we reserve the right to dismiss the delegate, without refund, for the remainder of the session.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

- The YMCA is committed to providing access to all who wish to participate in our programs. Need-based financial assistance is available. Financial Assistance is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Apply via our website by **December 1**.
- **Some requesting Financial Assistance may not be able to complete their registrations online. Please check with your Delegation Director for more information.**

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with disabilities requiring an accommodation or those who have a special need should contact the local Delegation Director. For students requiring special accommodations, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis within available resources.





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snapchat username: mnymcayig



IMPORTANT DATES 2021 – 2022

REGISTRATION OPENS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

Priority Registration Deadline	October 10, 2021
LAUNCH Online Training Event	October 30, 2021
Delegate Materials Deadline #1	November 17, 2021
Registration Closes	December 1, 2021
Delegate Materials Deadline #2	December 3, 2021
Youth in Government Session	January 6–9, 2022

**** Each group has its own schedule of local prep meetings in addition to these dates. Please check with your local Delegation Director for more info on local delegation meeting calendars.**

GET INVOLVED

YMCA Center for Youth Voice State Office

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Email us: youthvoice@ymcanorth.org

Visit us online at ymcayouthvoice.org

