



Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government



Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation

LEARN • LEAD • SERVE

What is Youth in Government?

There are two ways to learn about government:

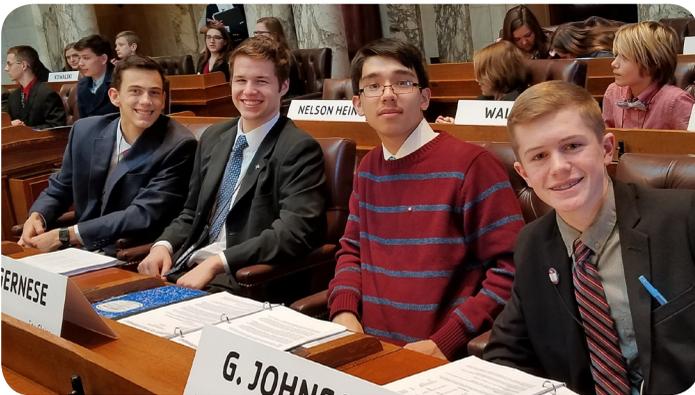
The first is to read textbooks about what others have done.

The second is to take that theoretical knowledge and apply it in an actual government setting.

ABOUT YIG

The Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government program provides teens with a unique opportunity to learn how to be civically engaged by acting as state legislators, lawyers, justices, and media. Students simulate all phases and positions of the actual state government and are challenged with many of the same issues our real legislators must face in their elected offices.

The program is open to all students in grades 7-12 and engages hundreds of students from across the state each year. During the culminating conference in Madison, participants take over the historic halls and chambers of the Wisconsin State Capitol and Supreme Court. Legislation is debated and court cases are decided, as students apply skills they have gained in the program.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

YIG participants, called "delegates," are given the choice between the following program areas:

LEGISLATURE

Youth Representatives and Senators identify state issues important to them, their families, their schools, or their communities and write legislation to improve our state. Delegates present their bills in committee hearings at Pre-Gov and on the house and senate floors in the Capitol Building in Madison.

MEDIA

Media delegates are responsible for reporting, producing, and publishing several news programs each day via newspaper and digital media. They interact with all program areas and report their findings to students and advisors at the conference.

SUPREME COURT

Judicial delegates play the dual role of lawyer and justice. Court members prepare for hearings and make arguments before Youth Justices. Each student will prepare a brief and argue their assigned side of a case, plus have an opportunity to serve on the bench and pass judgment on cases.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Comprised of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Secretary of State, these student leaders are voted in by their peers and serve the state program for the duration of their one-year term.

WHY SHOULD YOU GET INVOLVED?

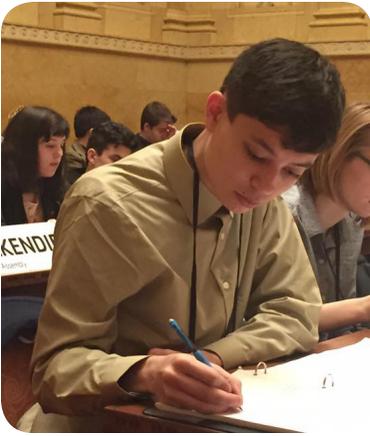
- It's a fun, challenging, non-partisan program filled with lots of opportunities for leadership.
- Spend a weekend in the state capitol in Madison, sitting in the same seats that our legislators do.
- Be encouraged to form your own opinions, express yourself, and find your voice.
- Hear from guest speakers who serve Wisconsin's communities every day.
- It's a great resumé-builder and an asset on a college application.
- Interact with students from other regions of the state who have different viewpoints than your own.
- Have powerful conversation on important issues in respectful and mind-opening ways.
- Meet new people and make friendships that will last a lifetime!
- Build skills for the real world, gaining traits you can't learn from a test - critical thinking, professional skills, leadership, confidence, and character.



Program Mission Statement

The Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government program seeks to foster the next generation of thoughtful, committed, and active citizens. Leaders are developed by doing, and our youth participants learn the principles of a democratic society by engaging with their peers in the process of civic action.

SPEAK YOUR MIND



WHAT DO THE DELEGATES HAVE TO SAY?

"Youth in Government has **meant the world** to me. I have always been interested in politics and public policy and it has been the perfect opportunity for me to learn. I have learned **more than I ever thought I would** about some issues people find vital to address. To sum it up, Youth in Government meant the **opening of my eyes to new opinions and experiences.**"

"The program surrounded me with **great peers** and **amazing role models**, but it also taught me how to **speak up for myself and others**. Youth in Government taught me how to **be my own person** and to not be afraid to show who that is to the world."

"YIG, to me, was such a blessing to attend because it allowed me to **immerse myself** in the world of politics and **debate freely**. While learning and interacting, I was able to **appreciate a community** that embraced **diversity in ideas** and encouraged each other."

"I have friends who have been in YIG for years and said it was **incredible**. To me, it all sounded cliché. People said it was **'eye-opening'** and **'life-changing'** and the first thing that came to mind was a Hallmark movie. Little did I know that **everyone was absolutely right**. There are so many words you can use to describe YIG, but for some moments **there are no words**. How do you explain the feeling in the air when the delegates arrive, or when someone is passionately debating about their bill? Or when friends see each other for the first time in a year? I guess you could use **'electric'** or **'a family bond,'** but I think that the description is up to every individual. For I see it as **'incredible.'**"

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit us: wisconsinyig.org

Email us: wisconsinYIG@gmail.com

Like us: facebook.com/WIYIG

Follow us: twitter.com/WIYIG

Check out our photos: instagram.com/WIYIG

Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government is a youth development program emphasizing the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. All are welcome and financial assistance is available.

Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government is a program of the Wisconsin & Upper Peninsula Michigan State Alliance of YMCAs



WISCONSIN YMCA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

What is Youth in Government?

Wisconsin YMCA Youth in Government is a youth-led civic engagement program for teens in grades 7-12 where student-delegates simulate Assemblies, Senate, Supreme Court, Media, and Executive Branch. Delegates from across Wisconsin convene at a Model Government conference each year to debate proposals they've written to improve our state.



Democracy must be learned by each generation

There are **two ways** to learn about government: The first is to **read textbooks** about what others have done. The second is to **take that theoretical knowledge and apply it in an actual government setting.**

Guided by the above motto, our program builds, strengthens, and encourages life skills and positive character traits, such as confidence, respect, responsibility, advocacy, and public speaking skills.

Our delegates are **inspired** to lead and **empowered** to create meaningful change.

www.wisconsinyig.org



WISCONSIN YMCA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

2020-2021 Program Year

Now more than ever, our young people are stepping up and using their voices across the nation - **join them by joining us!** For our 2020-2021 program year, you can expect...

- **Connections** made with other students from **across the state**
- The same **great programming** you've come to expect and enjoy
- A **fully-virtual** fall rally event, complete with **guest speakers**, political compromise **activities**, friendly **debate**, and (of course) ample **social time**
 - NEW **virtual workshops** throughout the year, on topics such as **government fundamentals, public speaking, persuasive writing, news literacy, grassroots advocacy, anti-racism**, and more!
- A **statewide conference** in spring - while at this time it's unclear whether this conference will be virtual or in-person, we are committed to providing an excellent experience with lots of opportunity for **leadership, mentorship, and relationship-building.**

How to get involved

We have student groups (called "delegations") already established (or being added for this program year) in many communities across the state. While the list is ever-growing, check for your community on the list below...

Chippewa Falls
Dane County
Door County

Eau Claire
Fond du Lac
Fox Cities

Green Bay
Kenosha
Kettle Moraine

Manitowoc
Milwaukee
Oconomowoc

Racine
Stevens Point
...and more!

Don't see your community listed? Don't fret!

This year, we are launching brand-new **VIRTUAL DELEGATIONS** - through this initiative, students from across the state will be able to work with a trained advisor and participate in our excellent program, without having to be attached to a locally-run group.

Ready to join us or looking for more info?

Visit wisconsinyig.org or contact wisconsinYIG@gmail.com