



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# DEMOCRACY MUST BE LEARNED BY EACH GENERATION



Indiana YMCA Youth  
and Government



# WHAT IS YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT?

Indiana YMCA Youth and Government or "INYaG" is a year-long experiential learning civic engagement program that uses mock government as a vehicle for teaching Hoosier 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders about democracy. The program develops young men and women who will be better citizens now by being both knowledgeable and active in determining the future of our democracy.

During 1936, the director of the New York State's Albany YMCA established the first YMCA Youth and Government program. Built on the motto, "Democracy must be learned by each generation," the national Youth and Government movement evolved to engage youth in experiential learning of government processes, generally through mock legislative, executive and judicial proceedings. Capitalizing on heavy volunteer support from individuals and organizations like the American Bar Association has been critical to the program's expansion, as separate statewide programs currently operate in every state and the District of Columbia, serving approximately 50,000 high school students.

The Indiana YMCA Youth and Government program began in 1965 under the coordination of the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis. After inactivity between 1979 and 1994, the program was reinvigorated under the leadership of several Indiana YMCAs. During 2001, INYaG coordination transitioned back to the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis.

To capitalize on the statewide focus of the Indiana Alliance of YMCAs (Alliance) and its state-level role in public policy advocacy, INYaG was officially adopted as a program of the Alliance during 2013. Through the Alliance, INYaG is led by a team of dedicated youth and adult volunteers from around the State.

## PROGRAM MISSION & GOALS

Throughout its transitions, INYaG has retained its mission of developing personal growth and encouraging life-long, responsible citizenship by providing experiential learning for young people and providing public forums to recognize the abilities and capabilities of youth. INYaG programs have sought to develop and promote an understanding of local, state, national, and international concerns; research, study and debate on public issues; exploration of careers in public service; interaction with adult and youth leaders involved in decision-making processes; an understanding of political systems and the forums they provide for the effective and peaceful resolution of issues and concerns; appreciation for the diversity of viewpoints on public issues and a concurrent respect for ideas, beliefs and the positions of others; and demonstration of citizenship responsibilities and leadership roles essential to the health of participatory democracy.

## OBJETIVES

In striving to develop young men and women who will be better citizens by being both knowledgeable and active in determining the future of our democracy, INYaG:

- Ensures that participants have a basic understanding of democracy in Indiana, including government offices and elected/appointed officials who hold them
- Provides training and experiences in understanding the legislative process
- Develops critical thinking and analytical abilities
- Provides active participation in the legislative process
- Develops interpersonal communication skills
- Provides awareness of social issues and their possible solutions
- Provides opportunities to listen to and develop respect for varying viewpoints

- Encourages active participation in political and public affairs

## ACTIVITIES

- 1) Leadership training
- 2) Workshops covering topics like Public Speaking, Critical Writing, Cultural Competency, etc.
- 3) Community activism, civic engagement, and applying political leverage
- 4) Academic enhancement through the development of research, reading, and writing skills
- 5) National trainings and conferences for interested students



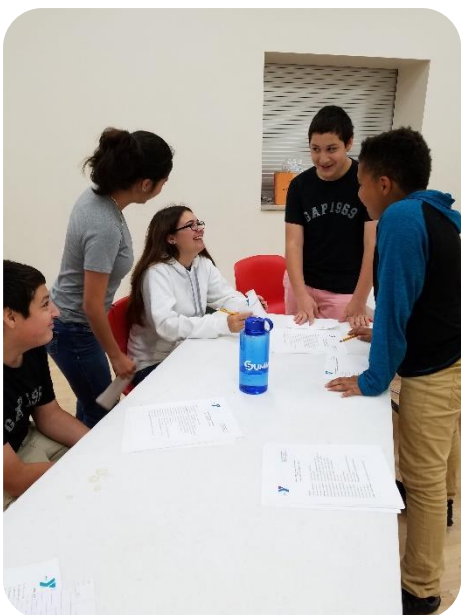
# LEARN MORE

Learn first-hand how our state government works—not by watching, but by doing!

Through INYaG, almost 200 students spend part of each academic year meeting in local community- and school-based delegations to discuss and debate issues that affect Indiana citizens and to propose relevant legislation. INYaG develops teens, called “Delegates,” to learn the values of democracy and to be leaders in the democratic process.

## DELEGATION MEETINGS

During weekly or bi-weekly meetings at your local YMCA, school or other community organization, you’ll discuss current issues in the state and gain hands-on experience in how the government works. You’ll work with other Delegates to write a bill, prepare briefs, select governmental positions to role-play, and run for elected offices. Your ultimate goal: To “take over” the Indiana Statehouse during a weekend in Indianapolis when you’ll apply the skills developed and knowledge learned through your delegation meetings.



## ORGANIZATION DAY

Before your trip to Indianapolis, you’ll first participate in a regional Organization Day (Org Day)—a mini-conference that orients you to the INYaG program, connects you to fellow delegates, and provides leadership development

opportunities that will aid you throughout and beyond their INYaG careers. In addition to inspiring INYaG delegates to assume leadership in their local and statewide communities, Org Day provides MGC-relevant training to delegates to ensure you arrive in Indianapolis with an understanding of your role and related expectations.



## MODEL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

All your work and fun as a Delegate peaks when you convene at the State Capitol where you’ll present and debate your bill, participate in oral arguments, and work with your friends to implement solutions through the legislative, judicial, and executive processes.

Join Indiana YMCA Youth and Government and make thousands of new friends from all over Indiana!

Earn community service hours for high school credit. Learn about the government in a stimulating environment full of moments for fun and socializing during elections. Come see what makes social opportunities. Indiana YMCA Youth and Government is an extraordinary experience!

“The reality of a student presenting a bill in the House or Senate Chambers cannot be recreated in a classroom setting. This program provides youth and teachers real life experience that for some is a once in a lifetime learning opportunity.”

# ROLES FOR PARTICIPANTS

## LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The **Youth General Assembly** is the signature and gateway program. Based on the Indiana General Assembly (YGA), the program strives to turn the ideas of Indiana youth into formal laws through bill-writing, debating, and voting on legislation according to specific rules and procedures.

All high school students in their first year of INYaG must participate in the YGA.

## EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Through the **Youth Executive Program**, elected student leaders provide youth voice to development of the overall program and provide operational leadership during the annual MGC. These elected individuals also represent INYaG at national events and serve as peer leaders among fellow delegates.

The program is open to any duly elected delegate.

## JUDICIAL BRANCH

While exposing high school students to the formal judicial process in Indiana, the **Model Supreme Court** (MSC) program promotes leadership through use of practicing attorneys and law students who not only judge delegates, but also serve as mentors. The MSC also promotes collaboration and compromise using teams of attorneys and teams of justices who together to accomplish their goals.

The MSC is open to all high school students who have previously participated in the Youth General Assembly.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The goal of the **Middle School Program** is to give middle school delegates an opportunity to experience different components of the high school program, allowing them to form an insider opinion to guide their own choices of

program during subsequent years. The program balances group activities with individual leadership development.

The Middle School Program is mandatory for all 7<sup>th</sup> graders and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are participating in the MGC for the first time. Returning 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have previously participated in the Middle School Program may participate in the Youth General Assembly.



# GET INVOLVED

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Any student in Indiana grades 7th through 12<sup>th</sup> can participate. All you need to do is register through a local organization hosting a delegation. Find the delegation closest to you by visit INYaG's website at [www.indianayg.org](http://www.indianayg.org).

If you do not see a delegation close to you and are interested in seeing one started in your community, please reach out to the Indiana Alliance of YMCAs.

## REGISTRATION FEES

**Delegation Meetings.** See your local delegation host to learn about costs, if any, associated with participating in local delegations.

**Organization Day.** There is no registration fee associated with Organization Day.

**Model Government Conference.** The registration fee associated with the annual MGC usually runs between \$250 and \$300 per participant; however, rates vary across the state, as local delegations may provide scholarships to partly cover the fee. Please consult with your delegation's advisor prior to registering for the MGC.

All conference related material and events are included in the cost. The fee does not cover lodging, transportation to and from the MGC, or meals outside of the Celebration Banquet.

Payment of MGC registration can be made online at the time of registration.

## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Call or e-mail:

Iesha Grove  
State Director of Civic Engagement  
Indiana Alliance of YMCAs  
(P) 317 715 2144  
(E) [iesha@indianaymcas.org](mailto:iesha@indianaymcas.org)

