



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.

WisconsinYIG.org

Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation

ABOUT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

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 members of the 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.

YIG is an experience like none other – a fun and immersive three 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.



“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.”

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE AT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Youth Assembly Members 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 Assembly and Senate floors in the Capitol Building in Madison.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

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.

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.

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 an absolute commitment to Youth in Government and to the students they serve.

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.

CONFERENCE LIFE

CONFERENCE DATES

Friday, March 4 – Sunday, March 6, 2022

LOCATIONS

Best Western Premier Park Hotel

22 S Carroll St
Madison, WI 53703

Wisconsin State Capitol

2 E Main St
Madison, WI 53703

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:

- Games & Crafts
- 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
- Adult Advisors supervise restaurants during every meal period

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00 AM	Wake up – Breakfast on your own
9:00 AM	Program sessions
12:00 PM	Lunch on your own
1:30 PM	Program sessions
5:00 PM	Dinner
8:00 PM	Evening activities
10:00 PM	Delegation meetings and reflection
11:00 PM	Curfew

MEALS & FOOD

Most meals are “on your own” during the conference. Students will have access to a variety of food options for meals along State Street and surrounding areas. The State Dinner on Saturday evening is included in the conference cost.

Many bring snacks and light breakfast items to eat in their hotel rooms. 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 WisconsinYIG.org

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



“I have learned more than I ever thought I would about some issues people find vital to address. Youth in Government meant the opening of my eyes to new opinions and experiences.”

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 and winter in local groups—called delegations—where they prepare materials for their program areas, listen to speakers, and practice their presentation skills. In January, delegates from all over the state come together for online Pre-Gov event to present their materials and to get ready for the Mach conference.

What is included in the program fee?

Two nights' lodging, the State Dinner during the conference, security, meeting space rental, evening activities, training and program preparation leading up to the conference, including a virtual Pre-Gov event in January.

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 WisconsinYIG.org

HOW TO REGISTER

- Register online at WisconsinYIG.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

- | | |
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| • Program Deposit | Due at registration |
| • ½ of Remaining Fee | Drawn on Credit Card
January 4, 2022 |
| • Final Balance | Drawn on Credit Card
February 1, 2022 |
- Cancellations may be made until January 28, 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 **January 28**.
- 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.

IMPORTANT DATES

REGISTRATION OPENS WEEK OF OCTOBER 15, 2021

Registration Closes	December 15, 2021
Delegate Materials Deadline	January 10, 2022
Virtual Pre-Gov Zoom	January 30, 2022
Youth in Government Session	March 4-6, 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.

CONTACT US

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