

Ohio and West Virginia Youth in Government Extend HI-Y's Impact

David King, Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA Executive Director
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Both Ohio and West Virginia's Youth in Government programs grew out of and continue to extend HI-Y's impact in both our two states. Ohio's program began in 1952 and West Virginia's in 1958.

HI-Y Youth in Government reflects the idea that *"democracy must be learned by each generation"* and is based on Thomas Jefferson's belief that, *"the purpose of education is to create good citizens of the community"*.



C. William O'Neill, 1952
founder of Ohio HI-Y
Youth in Government.

Our founders, the late C. William O'Neill, the only person in Ohio history to serve as Attorney General, Speaker of the House, Governor and Chief Justice, and the late Governor Cecil Underwood, West Virginia's youngest and then oldest Governor, worked with HI-Y students and State YMCA staff to create Youth in Government in each state. Both leaders recognized HI-Y's unique role engaging teenagers in improving their homes, schools and communities. They responded to teenagers who wanted to extend HI-Y's influence and leadership statewide.

"HI-Y is truly a seedbed of leadership," said O'Neill. *"HI-Y produces much needed local and state leadership,"* Governor Underwood stated when helping launch West Virginia's Youth in Government. He went on to say, *"The future of our nation depends upon the caliber of young people who will soon assume positions of leadership in our country. HI-Y Youth in Government will provide a year-round laboratory experience in practical politics. The youth of West Virginia will be able to study public issues, debate public policies, write legislation, and actually participate in the process of government."*



WVYG Founder
Governor Cecil
Underwood,
40th Youth
Governor Laurel
Lackey and 1st
Youth Governor
Rebecca Colebank
Duckworth at
YG's 50th
anniversary.

Both founders wanted Youth in Government to be more than just passing legislation. In fact, both thought the last thing needed to solve a problem was more legislation. What was needed were young people seeing what needs done to make their communities better, figuring out what to do and then doing it. Legislation is a last resort. Student legislation proposed to Youth in Government would come out of a student's real life and HI-Y volunteer experience.

O'Neill and Underwood believed in and supported HI-Y's approach to leadership development. They saw HI-Y change lives as teens changed their world. HI-Y's time-tested learn by doing model of leadership development works as HI-Y members identify the kind of school and community they want, create and carry out initiatives to achieve their vision and reflect on their work to strengthen future action. Both our Youth in Governments continue to build on this foundation.



Students arrive in Columbus to register for Ohio's 1963 Youth in Government.



WV's 1967 Youth Governor Ty Cobb is greeted by WV Senators Robert Byrd and Jennings Randolph at the National Youth Governor's Conference in Washington.



WV Governor Arch Moore, Jr., announces Reese Fuller from Glen Rogers HI-Y is the 1970 Youth Governor.

Now, as Ohio Youth in Government celebrates sixty years and West Virginia Youth in Government fifty-four years of service, leadership is just what both programs continue to produce.

Legislation first proposed in Youth in Government now is seen in more than three hundred actual laws in our states including those that:

- Require signal lights at railroad crossings
- Reclaim strip mined land
- Hold 18 year olds responsible for contracts they sign
- Create the white line on the side of the road
- Establish "right turn on red"
- Establish Special Education
- Provide for driver's education
- Promote campaign finance reform
- Provide for medical malpractice reform



WV First Lady Gayle Manchin with students at WV YG's 50th anniversary in 2008.

A significant accomplishment of HI-Y and Youth in Government is the July 1, 1971, ratification of the 26th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States granting the vote to 18 year olds.

The "father of the 18 year old vote," the late West Virginia Senator Jennings Randolph, explained the national impact of HI-Y and Youth in Government during a July 16, 1988, visit to YMCA Camp Horseshoe in West Virginia. *"A reason I took up the cause of the 18 year old vote was HI-Y clubs and Youth in Government programs across the nation were advocating lowering the voting age. I listened to our young people and decided to support their efforts. I proposed legislation to amend the Constitution. It took me more than 20 years to build support, get the votes and finally achieve success on July 1, 1971, when the 26th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. I am honored to be considered the father of the 18 year old vote and my association with HI-Y and Youth in Government."*



Senator Randolph presented a flag from the US Capitol to the Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA's Camp Horseshoe in West Virginia on July 16, 1988. The Senator was the last living legislator who voted to establish the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the depression. Senator Randolph urged HI-Y to get young people to vote and to continue the legacy of the CCC. Horseshoe was built by CCC youth. The Senator was a 50 year member of the Elkins, WV, YMCA; a member of the Washington D. C. Central Branch YMCA; and from 1962 – 1984 hosted the annual National Youth Governor's Senatorial Luncheon. In 1982 he was named *Y Guy of the Year*. The Senator's Horseshoe visit was arranged by Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA staff David King (Executive) and Tony Ganger (Program Director). Mr. Ganger is now Director of Foundation Relations with the YMCA of the USA.

Youth in Government teens fight hunger, improve the environment, promote healthy living, help vulnerable children and adults, read to children and more.



Hillsboro, OH, teens fight hunger by gathering food for local food banks.



Fayette Valley HI-Y invests 10,000 hours helping Fayette County, WV.



Williamson HI-Y partners with Read Aloud.

HI-Y Youth in Government teens assist the Governor's Youth Opportunity Camps for needy boys and girls at the Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA's Camp Horseshoe in West Virginia. West Virginia's Youth Action Council involves more youth in volunteer initiatives while Ohio's new HI-Y Teen Ambassadors created in 2010 by Ohio First Lady Frances Strickland works to move Ohio forward.



YOC allows – actually encourages and makes possible – a child to discover possibilities and turn their lives to learning and becoming. Lakin McKinney, WV HI-Y Youth in Government and Youth Action Council Volunteer Corps.

Our **Officer Leadership Corps** of HI-Y, Youth in Government and Model United Nations officers identify improvements for each program, set goals to accomplish, and recruit more students to benefit. The Officer Corps begins work at the Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA's annual HI-Y Leadership Summit at YMCA

Camp Horseshoe each June. HI-Y members, teens starting new HI-Ys and teens from other states describe their Summit experience . . . *This is the best experience of my life. I have learned more, grown more, and become the person I was intended to be. This opens your mind to the possibilities of what working with others can accomplish. This is an absolute masterpiece of time. I now am proud of who I am. Being here has made me a leader and a more confident person. This forced me to look inward and discover my flaws and be able to correct them so I can help others.*

Our communities, organizations, businesses, schools and every level of government also benefit as the base of effective leadership expands as more youth have a HI-Y experience. Hundreds of local citizens are volunteering, serving in elected and appointed positions and in careers because of their HI-Y experience. Our programs also produce state and national leaders.

David Mustine, Washington C. H., Ohio, HI-Y member and 1974 Ohio Youth in Government Chief Justice was appointed in 2011 by Ohio Governor Kasich as Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.



Hinton TRI-HI-Y member and WV Youth in Government participant Sylvia Mathews Burwell now heads up the Gates Foundation's Global Development Program.

Richard Celeste, who was defeated for Clerk of Ohio Youth in Government, went on to become a two term Governor of Ohio and head of the Peace Corps.

Ohio Governor Richard Celeste with 1989 Ohio Youth Governor T.D. Pollard.



John Glenn, member of the New Concord HI-Y and kitchen worker in the Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA's Camp Nelson Dodd became an astronaut and an Ohio United States Senator. He is pictured (left) with a student and (right) with Ohio Youth in Government founder C. William O'Neill and student officers when he keynoted the 1969 opening of Youth in Government.



Sandusky HI-Y member Tom Moyer became Ohio's Chief Justice serving from 1897 – 2011, Justice Moyer always gave our students their Oath of Office and personally met with our Model Supreme Court students. Justice Moyer also served on the committee to create the new 700 acre Ohio HI-Y Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership.



My association with the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA began in high school and included participation in Ohio HI-Y Youth in Government.

I am so pleased so many business and government leaders support Youth in Government. We all have a responsibility to pay forward. I believe the work of the

Ohio-West Virginia YMCA to create the new HI-Y Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership is a strong commitment to the future. In today's environment, Cave Lake's vision is just what our young people and adults need. Effective leadership is needed more than ever in all institutions, organizations, and levels of government. We must invest our time, energy, and resources in building the future.



McClain HI-Y member and Ohio Youth in Government participant Tony Ganger is now the YMCA of the USA's Director, Foundation Relations. He previously served as Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA program director.

HI-Y Youth in Government Initiatives for the 21st Century



Legislators join students from their district at the Youth & Government banquet.

8th Grade Youth & Government Seminars

bring more than 300 students from twenty-six counties to the West Virginia Capitol during the legislative session. Students are introduced to the process of state government, strengthen their understanding of the three branches of government, study the Constitution and the responsibilities of citizenship. State legislators and elected

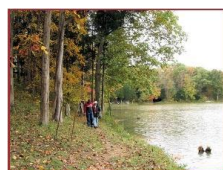


Senator Dave Sybold meets Preston County students.

officials meet with the students. Our goal is to have every county represented and to create a Seminar program in Ohio for 8th graders.

HI-Y Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership

The Ohio-West Virginia State YMCA purchased the 700 acre Cave Lake property in southern Ohio to develop into a nationally significant program to strengthen family, cultural, organizational, community and economic life throughout our states and beyond. Once fully operational 31,000 youth and adults will be benefit from on-site programs and a state-wide outreach will involve 6,000 youth in HI-Y, Youth in Government and Model United Nations.



HI-Y Youth in Government Serves as a Service-Learning Resource for Schools and Communities

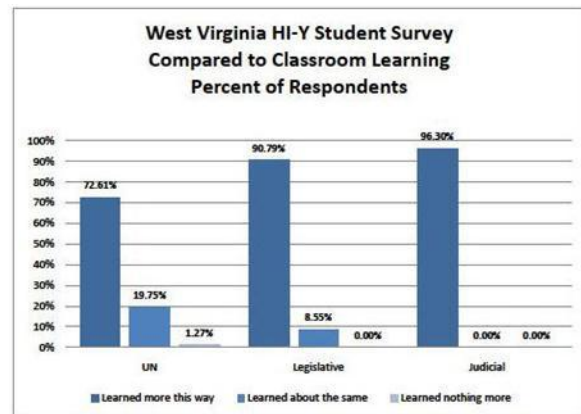
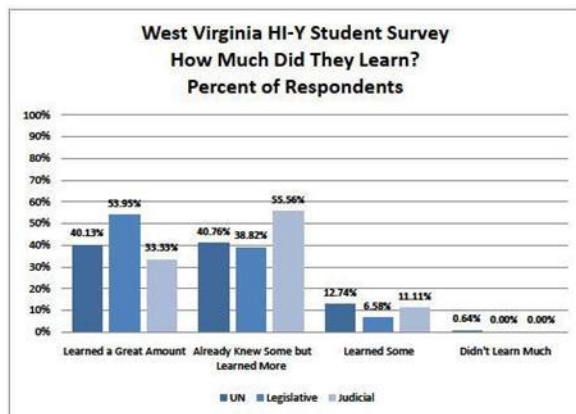
- Civic Engagement involving students in HI-Y's process of student initiated and led volunteer service, Youth in Government, Model United Nations, and the Entrepreneurship and Leadership Summits at Horseshoe;
- Providing technical assistance including on-site staff support to teachers and students;
- Youth Action Council to involve more youth in volunteer service, Summer Mini Service Grants, Youth Opportunity Camp Volunteer Corps;

- Expanding a student's experience and vision beyond their own school and community by connecting youth to HI-Y's two-state network of youth building better futures for all and special training at Horseshoe's Entrepreneurship and Teen Leadership Summits;
- HI-Y's 89th annual West Virginia and 102nd annual Ohio Fall Leaders for Tomorrow Conference in 2010 included the 20th Annual WV Service Learning Conference that promises to be an annual partnership.



Research confirms the value of HI-Y Youth in Government and HI-Y Model United Nations.

The West Virginia Department of Education Office of Assessment and Research evaluates West Virginia and Ohio Youth in Government's Student Legislature and Supreme Court and HI-Y's Model United Nations.



HI-Y's Walmart Foundation Teens of Promise grant produces results as new schools and more teens benefit from Youth in Government and join HI-Y's growing network of teens building better futures for all!



Teens of Promise partners with the GE Volunteer program at GE's Peebles Engine Testing Plant to improve facilities at HI-Y's Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership in southern Ohio. More than 4,000 children, teens and adults now benefit from these improvements. Once facilities and program are fully operational at Cave Lake, more than 31,000 annually will benefit from the leadership, community development, arts and family life programs Cave Lake will offer on this 700 acre crown jewel of Ohio's natural heritage.



West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin commends the Walmart Foundation's HI-Y Teens of Promise grant at the opening of the 2010 WV Youth in Government.

Cleveland's Achiever Program was able to involve teens in HI-Y and Youth in Government thanks to this Walmart HI-Y Teens of Promise Grant.



HI-Y Youth in Government tackles hunger and healthy eating in a partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission to Build a Culture of Entrepreneurship

Youth in Government and other students build an understanding of entrepreneurship at HI-Y's annual Entrepreneurship Summit at Horseshoe while teachers become certified REAL (Rural Entrepreneurship Action Learning) Instructors at REAL Institutes sponsored by HI-Y. Key partners include the WV Department of Education, Chamber of Commerce, Dominion, and local schools. Joining this effort in 2011 with new opportunities for HI-Y and Youth in Government teens to enhance their work to end hunger and promote healthy eating include the Department of Education's Agriculture and Pro Start groups, New Appalachian Farm and Research Center, Collaborative for the 21st Century, WV Food and Farm coalition, Pierpont community and Technical college Culinary Academy, WV Community Hub and others. HI-Y's thirty year partnership with the federal government's Summer Food Service Program brings their resources to this effort.



Ohio Youth in Government benefits from The Association of Ohio Commodores

The Association of Ohio Commodores was created by Ohio Governor James A. Rhodes in the 1966 to strengthen Ohio's economy. Governor Rhodes was a strong supporter of Youth in Government. HI-Y Youth in Government offer the Commodores a youth component supporting their development work and the Commodores provide volunteers and financial support to HI-Y Youth in Government.

Financial Support increases for HI-Y Youth in Government

Students invest their own funds or money they raise to cover about forty percent of our program costs. The balance comes from the contributions of alumni, friends, business, organizations, foundations, labor and government. Annual special fundraising events highlight our programs and secure financial support.



Steve Evans, member of the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA Board and co-chair with Doug White of the Cave Lake Leadership Team, announced Walmart Foundation's support to 500 Ohio leaders at HI-Y's annual November Beat Michigan Rally in Columbus.



Governor Earl Ray and Joanne Tomblin hosted HI-Y's annual Spirit of the Mountains at the Governor's Mansion on March 4, 2011. James H. "Buck" Harless received HI-Y's 2011 Lewis N. McManus Service Award. Spirit of the Mountains raises money to support WV Youth in Government and all our WV youth programs.

Workforce partners with HI-Y Youth in Government to benefit at-risk teens

by launching a pilot multi-county Workforce HI-Y with a goal of bringing a Workforce delegation to Youth in Government and Model United Nations. Already a Workforce Teen Leadership Camp is held at Horseshoe with our camp counselors introducing teens to the fun and positive learning that takes place in a resident camp setting.



Teens at the Workforce Leadership Camp at Horseshoe are introduced to Youth in Government by indentifying issues that concern them.



Workforce teens head out to fish and learn about the essentials of keeping mountain streams clean.



Jo Santiago, owner of Flying Higher, introduces teens to the importance of raptors.

A Concluding Comment

Transformational experiences rather than a three day event describe HI-Y's approach to engaging youth in building better futures for all through local HI-Y's, state-wide Youth in Governments, an international Model United Nations component, Camp Horseshoe, Cave Lake and HI-Y's 21st Century new initiatives.

President of the Senate and now Acting Governor, Earl Ray Tomblin, affirmed HI-Y Youth in Government's role in building the state's future when he keynoted the opening of the 53rd annual West Virginia HI-Y Youth in Government. *Youth in Government is based on HI-Y's foundation of volunteer service. You are not here just to pass one more law or to hear one more court case. You are here because you care about your community, our state and the future. HI-Y demonstrates that by being out in the community making differences for good. You volunteer to make our schools and communities better for everyone.*

You have worked to be here. It is much easier to attend a program that is just a three day event not requiring any advance work, study or thinking. You and your HI-Y have chosen a different path. To be here you tackle problems in your community. Your volunteer efforts are fighting hunger, helping the homeless, cleaning up our environment, helping children learn to read and so much more. The legislation you are proposing this weekend comes out of your life experience, not out of a book.

You represent the values of our state and nation. Individual citizens who come together to think, to study, and to recognize need when you see it and step up as volunteers to make things better. All West Virginia thanks you and HI-Y for building the future.