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ABOUT YIG

OVERVIEW

Since 1949, Missouri YMCA Youth In Government (YIG) has provided students with the opportunity to develop leadership skills and experience democracy. Based on the motto “Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation”, YIG is a statewide educational program that involves over 700 Missouri youth each year in various programs. These include our Model Government Program (State Convention), Executive Branch Leadership Institute, YMCA Advocacy Day, and Conference on National Affairs.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Missouri YMCA Youth In Government is to prepare students for responsible leadership in the American democratic process by providing guidance, training, and experience in the theory and practice of determining public policy.

Missouri YMCA Youth In Government is designed to:

- Motivate young people into citizenship responsibilities.
- Provide opportunities for understanding state agencies and their functions.
- Expand awareness and knowledge of state problems.
- Increase the ability of young people to organize and express ideas clearly and persuasively.
- Stimulate tolerance and understanding of other points of view.
- Give young people an opportunity to express their concerns on state issues to governmental officials in a responsible and constructive way.

MOTTO, VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

- Motto: Democracy must be learned by each generation.
- Vision: Youth In Government will inspire a passion for democracy.
- Mission: Youth In Government actively engages youth in the responsibilities of democratic leadership.
- Values: Youth In Government believes in the YMCA core values: Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

PROGRAM AREAS

The Model Government Program is for anyone who wants to experience the responsibility of governing Missouri for a few days, together with hundreds of other students from across the state. Whether you are interested in law, politics, or the press, there is a role for you in YIG. Every student plays an important role, participating in one of these program areas.

Civic Leadership Institute

All 8th grade students participate in this program area. They learn about and experience state government through various activities, such as bill writing, committee hearings, trying a case, and much more.

Executive Branch

Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General fulfill the duties of their offices after being elected at the previous State Convention.

Judicial

Students are exposed to the Missouri judicial process from participation in trials as attorneys and witnesses, to developing leadership skills through mentoring and serving as Judges in those trials. Students conduct mock trials before student judges, who after hearing the cases, issue decisions on each trial.

Legislative

Senators and Representatives write, debate, and vote on legislation in committee hearings and in chambers, before sending passed legislation onto the Governor to be signed or vetoed.

News Media

In Print Press, students develop story ideas, conduct interviews, and publish a multiple issue newspaper during the convention. In Video News, students cover events at the convention, develop stories, and broadcast a news show multiple times through the convention.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Missouri YMCA Youth In Government has established the following set of requirements for participants in the program.

1. Participants must be students in grades 8 – 12.
2. Participants must be active in a YIG delegation at their school or local YMCA.
3. Participants may only serve in one program area and must file a timely application for participation in the desired program area.
4. All 8th grade students must participate in the Civic Leadership Institute.
5. Each participant must submit appropriate program assignments by the stated deadline. Failure to do so will result in the participant being dropped from YIG.
6. Participants must be properly registered, with completed Participation Agreements and Medical forms, and have paid all fees in full before the stated deadlines in order to attend the State Convention.
7. Students who are seniors and have not participated in a prior YIG State Convention will not be accepted into the program unless space is available.

MODEL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Legislators debating bills in both the House and Senate chambers. The Governor threatening a veto. Reporters acting on a hot tip to break a big story. Supreme Court Judges considering arguments from youth attorneys during a mock trial.

Government as usual? Not quite. They are all students participating in the Missouri YMCA Youth In Government (YIG) State Convention held each November/December at the State Capitol in Jefferson City. It is the culmination of months of preparation by Youth In Government delegations which have been meeting all fall to prepare for the three-day mock government session.

This experience is designed to familiarize students with the decision-making process at the state level. Since 1949, YIG has provided students with the opportunity to develop leadership skills and experience democracy. The YIG Model Government Program is a student-driven simulation of state government and political activities, which involves over 700 Missouri youth in grades 8-12. Beginning in the fall of each year, students come together in their local delegations to choose their roles and register appropriately with YIG. Throughout the fall, students work in their local delegations to prepare for the State Convention by completing the required work for each program area. All of this training and preparation culminates with the annual State Convention.

The program is most active from August to December, with meetings held regularly to prepare for the State Convention. It is essential that participants attend all of the events required of them in order to have a true YIG experience.

DELEGATION MEETINGS

The local delegation forms the basis for all other YIG activities. This is where students have the greatest opportunity for participation and education. The number of meetings will vary from delegation to delegation. Meetings may include training in specific programs, election of officers, mock debate or practice trials, preparation for elections, fundraising, guest speakers, and other activities. Each delegation should elect a delegation leader, with larger delegations possibly electing two leaders. Also, experienced students should serve as mentors to students who are new to YIG.

STATE CONVENTION

At the three-day YIG State Convention in Jefferson City, students create their version of state government under the guidelines of the Missouri Constitution. Legislators meet in committees and in the House and Senate chambers to debate legislation. Attorneys try their cases before student judges

and engage in a moot trial competition. The entire event is covered by a student newspaper and by a student television news program. Participants also engage in campaigns and elections for officers who will serve during the following year.

Beginning in 2008, YIG began offering two State Conventions to accommodate more students in the program. The Lewis State Convention is usually held in mid-November. The Clark State Convention is usually held in late November/early December. Each delegation only attends one State Convention. By offering two State Conventions, YIG now has the ability to include even more youth in our Model Government Program.

DRESS CODE

CAPITOL DRESS

Men must wear a suit, shirt and tie, or dress slacks, shirt, tie and a sports coat. Dress shoes and socks are required. No denim or leather clothing, letter sweaters or jackets, shorts, or hats may be worn.

Women must wear a suit, dress, or a blouse and blazer with a shirt or dress slacks. Dress shoes are required. No denim or leather clothing, letter sweaters or jackets, shorts, or hats may be worn. Skirts and dresses should have a hem no higher than 3" above the knee.

BUSINESS CASUAL

Men must wear pants with a dress shirt, polo, or sweater. Dress shirts and polos must have a collar. Dress shoes and socks are required. No denim, tennis shoes, or flip-flops may be worn. Shirts must be tucked in. No cargo pants are allowed.

Women must wear pants or a skirt with a dress shirt, polo, or sweater. Skirts must be no shorter than 3" above the knee. All shirts and sweaters must have sleeves. No denim, tennis shoes, or flip-flops may be worn.

CASUAL

Men and women are allowed to wear jeans, shorts, t-shirts, tennis shoes, flip-flops, and sweatshirts. Undergarments must be worn and may not be seen. Skirts must be no shorter than 3" above the knee.

INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Men and women are not allowed to wear any transparent or slightly see-through clothing, skirts shorter than 3" above the knee, clothing with inappropriate language or imagery, tube tops, and other inappropriate clothing. A safe rule is that if someone needs to ask if an outfit seems appropriate, chances are it is not appropriate.

NAMETAGS

All participants must wear their Missouri YMCA Youth In Government nametags on the outside of their clothing at all times during Missouri YMCA Youth In Government functions, including at the hotel at any time. Nametags must not be altered in any way.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Please refer to www.moyig.org for updated Student Participant Agreement to be signed each year.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I agree that as a student in Missouri YMCA Youth In Government (MOYIG), I am expected to conduct myself in a manner that reflects well upon myself, my delegation, and the YMCA as a whole. This Code of Conduct supersedes all previous Codes of Conduct. I will sign it and follow all of the contents of this Code of Conduct as well as those contained within the Student Handbook.
2. I agree that this Code of Conduct applies to all of my activities in MOYIG, including, but not limited to, the State Convention, Executive Branch Leadership Institute, Conference on National Affairs, all training events, meetings and all other activities relating to or conducted with regard to MOYIG.
3. I will attend all required meetings and events and be responsible for the rules set by my school, my delegation, and the MOYIG Board of Advisors.
4. I agree that at all MOYIG functions, as a student, I will.
 - a. Show respect to myself, to other students and advisors, as well as visitors, tour groups and sponsors of Missouri YMCA Youth In Government and will conduct myself in an appropriate and professional manner during all activities and functions.
 - b. Conduct myself in a responsible manner, regarding all housekeeping rules. In this regard, I will always leave all environments I am in contact with in a better condition than when I arrived. I will collect and dispose of all litter, papers and refuse that are created by me or other.
 - c. Not use or possess any weapons, tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs or substances at any time.
 - d. Show respect to all facilities and materials owned by or loaned to MOYIG.

FEE PAYMENT

5. I understand that all of my fees are non-refundable once delivered to my advisor or State Office for payment to MOYIG.

DRESS CODE

6. I agree that, as a student, I will conform to the following dress code when attending MOYIG functions unless given specific instructions by the State Office that casual dress is approved.
7. I recognize that the dress code, which follows, is intended to convey a professional appearance and encourage a more professional attitude by me as a participant.
 - a. Men must wear a suit, shirt and tie, or dress slacks, shirt, tie and a sports coat. Dress shoes and socks are also required. No denim or leather clothing, letter sweaters or jackets, shorts, or hats may be worn.
 - b. Women must wear a suit, dress, or a blouse and blazer with a shirt or dress slacks. Dress shoes are also required. No denim or leather clothing, letter sweaters or jackets, shorts, or hats may be worn. Skirts and dresses should have a hem no higher than 3" above the knee.
 - c. All participants must wear MOYIG name tags on the outside of their clothing at all times during MOYIG functions, including at the hotel at any time. Name tags must not be altered in any way.

HOTEL CONDUCT

8. I agree that as a student while participating in MOYIG functions, I must be in my assigned room by curfew to stay for the night, remaining quiet, unless I have written permission from an advisor of my delegation and an adult program coordinator to be out of my room past curfew.

9. I agree that at no times after curfew will I leave the hotel. At no time will I be in an unauthorized room, which is any room not used by MOYIG.
10. I agree that, as a student, I will not leave, remain in, or return to the hotel at any time except when scheduled to do so without prior approval of an adult advisor of my delegation or the State Office.
11. I agree that, as a student, I may have occasion to visit the room or be visited by a member of the opposite sex. I agree that when I visit a member of the opposite sex I will conduct myself in a responsible manner, leaving the door of the hotel room completely open during the entire visit from a member of the opposite sex.

PROPERTY

12. I agree that I will be responsible for any damage or loss of property in my hotel room, whether it is my property, the property of the hotel, the property of another resident of my room or any other individual.
13. I further agree that I shall be solely responsible, with my parent/guardian, for the damage or loss of any property that I bring to any Missouri YMCA Youth In Government sponsored activity.
14. I agree that I will protect the same, or insure it adequately, so that if loss or damage does occur, that I may be adequately compensated.
15. I agree that I shall not hold responsible MOYIG, the Board of Advisors, the individual members of the Board of Advisors, the YMCA staff, my school, the professionals from my school, nor any other individual for any loss or damage to any personal property which I may bring to any MOYIG sponsored activity. I understand that there may be an informal storage location provided by MOYIG t, but that informal storage location may not be secured or monitored and that the property that I leave there may be subject to damage, theft, or other destruction. I further state that if I choose to use this storage location, neither the hotel nor MOYIG will be responsible for any damage or loss of those items. Each individual delegation shall be responsible to provide secured storage for students' property as they deem fit and appropriate.

TRANSPORTATION

16. I understand that MOYIG shall not be responsible for transportation or for any determination regarding transportation from any location within the State of Missouri, or elsewhere, and shall make no determination or recommendation as to the method of transportation from any local school, YMCA or other departure location. MOYIG shall leave the determination with regard to appropriate transportation to the local school, YMCA or parent, as the case may be.

DISCIPLINE

17. I agree that I, together with my parent/guardian, shall be bound by any decision of the Disciplinary Committee and consent to any punishment which may be issued by the Disciplinary Committee, including being required to return home.
18. I waive any due process rights that I may have relating to MOYIG.
19. Further, I understand and agree that, as a student, the penalty for violating this Participation Agreement or any additional rules established by advisors, my local delegation, and/or the MOYIG Board of Advisors will result in consequences determined by the Disciplinary Committee and the State Director. Any violation may result in my immediate dismissal from the MOYIG program and notification of my parent/guardian and my school district. My parent/guardian and I are solely responsible for all expenses and arrangements relating to any disciplinary action taken regarding my behavior. I understand that my dismissal will result in the forfeiture of any fees paid on my behalf and jeopardize my future participation in MOYIG.

This contract of participation is an agreement that binds both parent/guardian and student to the Code of Conduct contained in this agreement. By signing this agreement, I acknowledge all of the contents of this agreement and am bound hereby.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

At the State Convention, a Disciplinary Committee will be established consisting of the State Director (non-voting), Program Committee Chairperson, three adult advisors and three students. The Chairperson only votes in case of a tie and all decisions are only recommendations to the State Director who makes the final disciplinary action decisions.

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

When a disciplinary incident occurs, the following steps will be followed.

1. The Program Committee Chairperson and State Director will speak to the offending student(s) and their delegation advisor seeking all details and any pertinent information on the incident and call all parent(s), if necessary.
2. The student(s) should be shown the Student Participation Agreement they signed, the published consequences they could receive, and the disciplinary procedures.
3. If it is felt further investigation is warranted, the Program Committee Chairperson will call together the members of the Disciplinary Committee and notify the offending student(s), their advisor(s), and any witnesses of the time and location of the meeting.

The Disciplinary Committee will use the following agenda for its meetings:

1. The Chairperson informs the committee of the details of the incident.
2. The Chairperson directs the questioning of the witnesses and the offending student(s), with the committee members asking for clarification or interjecting their own questions.
3. Witnesses are called into the committee session one at a time for their own statements.
4. Offending student(s) and their advisor(s) are called in for statements.
5. In the event that an advisor giving a statement is also a member of the Disciplinary Committee, s/he will not be allowed to participate in the session except to give a statement. No substitutes will take the advisor's place on the committee.
6. The committee discusses its options and thoughts, voting on a recommendation.

The State Director makes his decision and, along with the Chairperson, meets with the offending student(s) and advisor(s), and calls the parents to inform them of the decision, if necessary.