



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## California YMCA Youth & Government

"Democracy must be learned by each generation."

# MODEL LEGISLATURE & COURT

Volunteer Handbook Supplement



California YMCA Youth & Government \* 2555 3rd Street, Suite 215 \* Sacramento, CA 95818 \* 916.756.0230 \* [www.calymca.org](http://www.calymca.org)



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Welcome to the ML/C family!

As a former advisor to the California YMCA Model Legislature & Court (ML/C), I am fortunate to be able to experience first-hand, the positive impact that our Volunteers have on the lives of young people. The impact of the Model Legislature & Court has been well documented. Our alumni attend college, become leaders in their communities, and vote in far greater percentages than the general population. However, the ML/C experience is much more than those statistics.

Though our delegates may not realize it now, participation in the ML/C will likely be one of the more lasting and positive memories of their high school career. Without our Volunteers, creating those experiences would not be possible. By volunteering for the ML/C you have chosen to be a role model, mentor, cheerleader, and friend to an amazing group of young people.

As you begin your journey in the Model Legislature & Court, I hope that you will remain aware of the tremendous impact that you are having in the lives of young people. Nearly 80% of our Volunteers were ML/C delegates in High School. You can speak to any one of them about the incredible experience of the ML/C.

The bonds we make with our delegates, and indeed with your fellow volunteer staff and advisors, will also likely last a lifetime. That is why we refer to our volunteers as "Family." Like many large families, ours is a fun, quirky and opinionated group. However, like a good family, our relationships are deep, enduring, and filled with love.

Thank you for your time and commitment,



Morgan Bauer  
Program Director

## Table of Contents

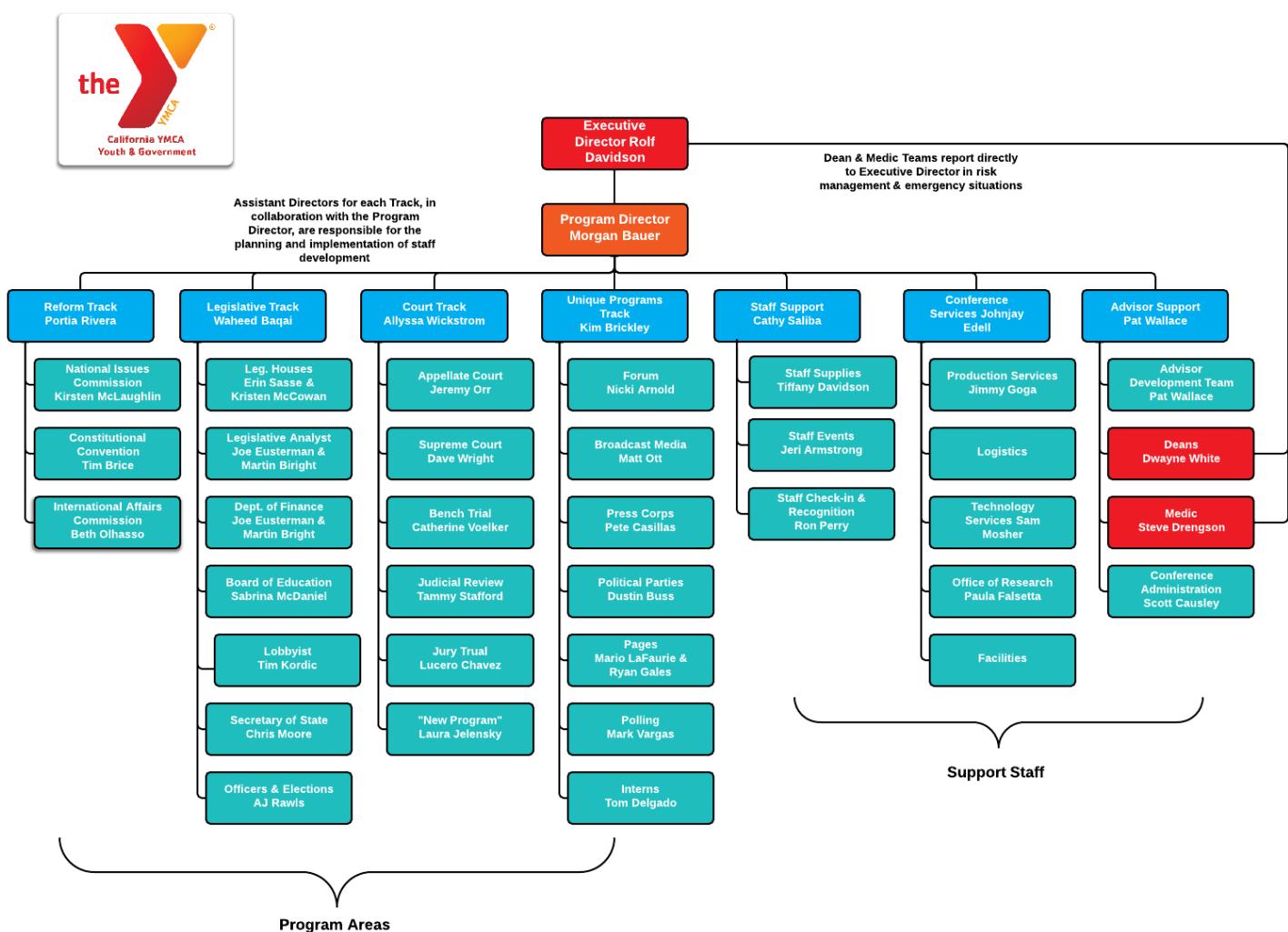
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Program Area Diagram .....	3
Model Legislature & Court .....	4
The Program Year .....	5
Program Areas.....	6
Adult Recognition Program .....	12
ML/C Glossary of "Y&G-isms".....	13

## Program Area Diagram

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This diagram outlines the Model Legislature & Court program, staff structure, and division of responsibilities. This structure demonstrates the flow of information as new program areas are developed or concerns arise.



## Model Legislature & Court

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Model Legislature & Court (ML/C) is a statewide youth educational program involving more than 2500 high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors in a nine-month "hands on" experience. Since its inception over 60 years ago, the program has used a variety of activities to build, encourage and strengthen those life assets and character traits that will help high school youth become involved, responsible adults who are decent and respected citizens. The tool used is a high-quality experiential and educational simulation based upon California's system of government. The program is comprehensive, and its impact on the youth participants is dramatic. The core purpose of this highly regarded program is exemplified in the program's motto . . . *Democracy Must Be Learned By Each Generation*".

Each youth Delegate is trained and serves in an important position in this model government.

The program is open to all high school students in grades 9-12 whether or not they are members of the YMCA. The sponsoring organizations, usually community YMCAs, form one or more delegations by recruiting teenagers at high schools or through teen outreach programs. In order for the program to provide opportunities to all interested high school students at any location in the state, some delegations are sponsored directly by schools or other organizations. Delegations generally meet weekly in local communities to prepare for ML/C.

### Youth Roles

ML/C Delegates mimic their governmental counterparts as closely as possible. Senators and Assembly Members will debate bills, Lobbyists will attempt to sway votes, Justices will hear arguments and render verdicts, the Media will record it all, and so forth. Delegates can choose to serve in a variety of roles including:

- Senator
- Assembly Member
- Supreme Court Justice/Attorney
- Legislative Analyst
- Elected or appointed Officer
- Polling Member
- National Issues Commissioner
- Board of Education Member
- Political Parties Leadership
- Undersecretary of State
- Department of Finance Committee Person
- Trial Court Judge/Attorney
- Judicial Review Attorney
- Print Media Reporter/Editor/Photographer
- Broadcast Media Reporter/Crew
- Governor's Cabinet
- International Affairs Commissioner
- Legislative/Judicial Page
- State Constitutional Convention Member
- Appellate Court Justice/Appellant/Respondent
- Jury Trial Attorney

### Adult Roles

Adults serve as Interns (ages 18-20) and Program Staff or Advisors (age 21 and up). Interns are assigned to different program areas to assist in operations, and Program Staff provide professional expertise and support in all Program Areas. Advisors are selected by Delegations and provide direct supervision at local Delegation meetings and statewide conferences. Program Staff are recruited, supervised and evaluated annually by Lead Staff in collaboration with the ML/C Program Director.

## The Program Year

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The Model Legislature & Court holds three statewide conferences each year. Generally, Delegations meet weekly (Sept - March) in their local communities. ML/C provides conferences in November, January and February for training and delivery of the program.

### **Training & Elections I (T&E I )**

Held at Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, CA in November, the first statewide conference of the year focuses on giving new Delegates an overview of the ML/C program. Delegates meet with Program Staff from each program area to be introduced to specific expectations and help decide what role they would like to take. Returning Delegates focus on leadership development, and freshmen Delegates begin the Forum program. T&E I is a three day conference that takes place over Veterans' day weekend. Dress is casual (see "Dress Code"- Attachment).

### **Training & Elections II (T&E II)**

In January we return to Camp Roberts for another three day training conference taking place over Martin Luther King's Birthday weekend. Prior to this event, Delegates will have selected their roles, Program Areas, in their delegation meetings. During T&E II they receive specific training on their role in the ML/C. Dress is casual (see "Dress Code" attachment).

### **Model Legislature & Court (Sacramento)**

The Model Legislature & Court experience, often referred to as "Sac", is the culmination of the program year. Held in February, this five-day conference begins with an opening session that is usually attended by the Governor of California. Delegates are privileged to use the historic halls and chambers of the California Legislature, the Governor's Office, the California Supreme Court, and other official buildings and offices. Dress is business attire (see "Dress Code" attachment).

### **Volunteer Time**

Your time as a Volunteer to serve the youth of California is greatly appreciated! In addition to the three statewide conferences, ML/C Volunteers are invited to attend annual staff meetings and events designed to inform them of ML/C specifics, create an opportunity for feedback, and provide fellowship opportunities with other volunteers like you!

### **Emergency Procedures**

Because Y&G uses multiple facilities in multiple cities, emergency procedures will vary with location. In all instances, emergency evacuation will be discussed prior to or at the opening of every conference. Printed materials identifying an Emergency Evacuation Area will be handed out to all participants, with specific procedures pertaining to certain facilities.

## Program Areas

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Specific roles Delegates choose will shape their experience. The following section provides an overview of the roles available to Delegates.

### **The Legislative Houses Track**

#### **Officers & Elections**

An important aspect of Youth & Government is the opportunity for participants to serve in leadership positions. In the ML/C there are two types of leadership positions: appointed leadership and elected officers. Whenever more than 2500 bright motivated teens participate in a program, the level of competition for leadership opportunities is intense. A complete set of Election Guidelines and position descriptions can be found in the Candidate Handbook located online at [www.calymca.org](http://www.calymca.org). Officers & Elections is housed within the Secretary of State's Office.

#### **Assembly and Senate**

The Assembly (250 members) and the Senate (300 members) make up the Legislature of the ML/C. To accommodate desired participation, youth legislators are divided into two groups (Blue and Gold). Senators and Assembly Members are primarily concerned with the authority and passage of legislation. They are voting members of various committees, and certain members act as Committee Chairpersons. Legislators are expected to be well-versed in the pros and cons of the legislation they consider so they can exercise their vote in an intelligent and far-sighted manner. They enlist the aid of Lobbyists and Legislative Analysts in their endeavor to comprehend more fully all aspects of legislation.

In committee, Legislators debate, amend, pass, and/or defeat legislation dealing with specific topics. Legislators are assigned to committees randomly, except for those Legislators acting as legislation sponsors who are assigned to their bill's specific committee. Committees are made up of both Senators and Assembly Members.

On the floor of the Assembly and Senate, members debate legislation. Proponents present the bills, some from the house of origin and some from the other house, to the members with an Author/Sponsor speech. After debate and summation, the bill is voted on. If passed in its house of origin, a bill then goes on to the other house. If passed by the other house, the bill is sent to the Youth Governor for his or her consideration (except in the case of Concurrent or Joint Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments).

#### **Board of Education (BoE)**

The Board of Education functions as both the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education, and is headed by the Youth State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each year the Board focuses on a current issue in California education, analyzing the status quo, potential improvements that could be made, and why those changes should be effected. Members are divided into taskforces that work on an aspect of the major topic. These groups research their position on the topic, hear speakers and write a proposal advocating their solution to the problem. The program culminates in a public hearing with the Department members advocating their proposals before the Board members. Within a fixed budget universe, the Board is asked to rank and fund the proposal presented by the Department.

**Department of Finance (DoF)**

Delegates will be assigned to a large budget group of at least 50 delegates. Each large budget group will be competing with other large budget groups in the program. And all such groups will be given the same challenge: create a budget that the Governor will approve.

Just like bills in the Senate or Assembly, delegates will be responsible for putting forth new policies or amending existing ones, which impact the state budget. As the budget touches upon practically everything in the government, these proposals' subjects will be very wide-ranging. But each delegate can only bring new or amended policies which are of the subject of their assigned smaller committee, such as corrections, education, or health care. All proposals, which pass through the committees, will be read and debated in the delegate's respective large group. Delegates will need to defend their ideas and present persuasive arguments for them, including financial cost or saving figures. Proposals approved by the larger group will be added to their respective budget. Only one group's budget will win the challenge, and be chosen as the Governor's budget.

**Lobbyists**

Lobbyists are sometimes considered the "third house" of the Legislature. Lobbyists play two roles. First, they select bills they feel passionate about and work to see them passed, or in some cases, defeated. The other important role Lobbyists play is that of educating Legislators. No one person can possibly be an expert on every topic he or she needs to vote on, so part of a Lobbyist's job is to be able to tell Legislators what they need to know about the various bills and why they should vote for or against them.

A Lobbyist is the expert! Each Lobbyist is trained to understand bills, committee procedures, public speaking, and how to write and pass an initiative. Lobbyists also form Political Action Committees (PACs) with other Lobbyists to brainstorm on initiative proposals.

**Legislative Analysts (Leg. An.)**

The Legislative Analyst program is ideal for delegates looking to influence public policy, delegates who thrive on challenges, and delegates who can think for themselves on their feet. The Legislative Analyst program is a specialized, very small, yet highly influential program area within the Model Legislature & Court.

The function of Legislative Analysts are to serve as the impartial "expert" on the policy and fiscal issues of their assigned legislation. Legislative Analysts are teamed up with a partner, with whom they will dissect their legislation to determine its financial ramifications. This will take place at T&E II, and while at home, until the Model Legislature in Sacramento. This analysis includes determining the Legislative intent of the bill or resolution, identifying the major issues of the bills (both pro and con), and determining the fiscal impact of the bill on the State. Once in Sacramento, Legislative Analysts will speak in committees, and on the floor of the legislature to educate Senators and Assembly members of their analysis.

**Court Track**

The Court Program mimics the Judicial Branch of California State Government. The program begins with the Trial Court branch of the State Courts: the Superior Municipal Branch. Most disputes between parties begin at this level. In other words, any criminal matter (violation of the penal code) or any civil matter (generally dealing with money or injunctive relief) is usually heard first at this level. At the conclusion of a Superior Municipal Court action, the Judge (in a bench trial) or a Jury (in a jury trial) renders a decision. Most cases end with that decision.

However, sometimes the losing party in a Superior Municipal court case will seek a different result by filing an appeal before the Appellate Court. Then, depending on the outcome of the appeal, an aggrieved party at the Appellate level who is not satisfied with the Appellate Court's ruling regarding an issue of law, may then appeal its case to the highest court in the State of California, the esteemed California Supreme Court. The California Supreme Court decides issues similar to that of the Appellate Court, however, its decisions, once reached, are final.

### **Bench Trial**

The Trial Court gives Delegates a chance to experience what it's like to actually be in a courtroom trying a case in front of a judge. All Delegates are taken through an intense course in trial techniques and are taught the basics of trial advocacy (opening statements, closing statements, direct examinations, cross examinations, and courtroom evidence). Delegates are then assigned a role as plaintiff/prosecutor or defense and then given a case to work up to trial. The program culminates in the halls of the Sacramento County Superior Court, where each Delegate has his/her "day in court." There, each Delegate has the opportunity to advocate their client's position to a judge.

### **Jury Trial**

Delegates must apply to be a part of the Jury Trial program. Selected applicants will have the opportunity to try their case, give opening statements, and cross examine **witnesses** in front of a jury of their peers.

### **Appellate Court**

In the Appellate Court, Delegates serve as either a justice or an attorney. During Appellate Court proceedings, attorneys present an oral argument to a panel of justices who draft one or more opinions to decide the case. Typically five justices, wearing the traditional black judicial robes, serve together on a panel. The attorneys work in pairs, two for the "appellant" (the party who brought the appeal to the Appellate Court) and two for the "respondent" (the party who is defending against the appeal). Each attorney presents oral argument to the justices who may question the attorney and pose hypothetical scenarios for the attorney to grapple with. Following the oral argument, the justices work together to draft opinions.

### **Judicial Review**

The Judicial Review program is a hybrid of the Appellate and Supreme Court programs with a real life component. The eight Judicial Review attorneys and justices are selected by an application and interview process. Delegates are not provided with materials other than the legislation, but rather are given a crash course in legal research. They arrive a day early in Sacramento, where they proceed to the county courthouse law library to find laws and cases that support their respective positions. Delegates explore the vast resources available to and used by real attorneys on a daily basis. The Delegate Attorneys "brief" (study and outline) their case to develop their oral arguments. The attorneys then argue their respective positions before the justices in the California Supreme Court chambers. The Justices question the Attorneys during their arguments, and then meet to write their decisions.

### **Supreme Court**

The Supreme Court program offers a detailed and challenging experience. Participation in this program is by selection. Supreme Court members are given cases involving complicated constitutional issues. Included with the cases are several "precedent" cases (real case opinions written by other courts) whose arguments they apply to their cases. The attorneys and justices work together to review and discuss the cases with staff attorneys, and then work separately to develop their oral arguments (the attorneys) and questions (the

justices). The court hearings are held over two days in the historic California Supreme Court chambers. Attorneys make their arguments while receiving questions from the court. The justices then retire to write their opinions.

### **Reform Track**

#### **International Affairs Commission (IAC)**

The International Affairs Commission will provide delegates with opportunities to learn and explore world problems and develop solutions to some of the world's most pressing issues. Delegates will work in small teams (3-4) to learn about and then develop innovative solutions to international/world issues (clean and available water, human trafficking, whaling, air quality, deforestation, nuclear arms, immunizations, terrorism, poverty, famine, animal extinction, global pandemics, colonization, trade, woman's rights, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, drug trafficking, adoption, infrastructure, etc.). The program will focus on collaborative work, research, technology based presentations, traditional public speaking and debate.

#### **National Issues Commission (NIC)**

The National Issues Commission offers opportunities for Delegates (Commissioners) to debate and research issues of national importance. NIC's primary objective is to prepare and consider each Commissioner's proposal.

Commissioners are responsible for independently researching issues (with assistance from Staff and fellow Commissioners) on a specific topic of their choice. Commissioners then write a one-page proposal, which relates to their issue of interest and then prepare and deliver a two-minute speech in favor of their proposal at a Commission Hearing.

In Sacramento every Commissioner has several opportunities to speak. Commissioners argue in favor of their proposals and debate the merits and flaws of other proposals in four hearings ("rounds") of increasing size. At the end of each round, Commissioners rank the proposals presented using specific criteria. Proposals that advance to the next "round" are determined by each proposal's composite score from these rankings. In the fourth and final round (known as the General Assembly or "GA") the top proposals are presented by their author to the entire NIC body and the proposal is passed or defeated.

#### **State Constitutional Convention (Con Con)**

The State Constitutional Convention is designed to provide hands-on creation of a Constitution for the state of California. As such, Delegates create the document from scratch without the benefit or hindrance of a survey of current or prior versions of the California Constitution. Throughout the program, participants are immersed in constitutional issues ranging from voting rights to resource use to property rights all while learning the difference between the federal and state constitutions. Training for this program is highly interactive as Delegates engage one another over constitutional concepts in one-on-one, small group and large group speaking opportunities.

State Constitutional Convention is led by a Convention Speaker and Speaker Pro-Tem who are appointed from within the group at the last session at T&E II. Through participation in State Constitutional Convention Delegates learn the issues unique to the Constitution of California, how to solve the challenges of making something concrete from a series of abstract concepts, and how to work effectively one-on-one and in small and large groups.

## **Unique Programs Track**

### **Polling Program**

This program is designed to teach delegates another real world component of the political process; the polling process. This process involves measuring and interpreting people's opinions, and often includes the gathering of information about political candidates, as well as people's interests and/or concerns. This information can then be used to determine/shape legislation, a campaign, or training.

At T&E II delegates will break into five teams of four with four, with each team following the lead of the team captain. These teams will learn about data collection and analysis, identifying bias, and the importance of phrasing in shaping survey results.

Delegates in this program area will have the opportunity to interact with Political Parties, Broadcast Media, Press Corps, Governor's Office, Lobbyist Program and Y&G Administration

### **Page Program**

The Page Program is designed to allow new participants an opportunity to see every facet of the Model Legislature & Court (ML/C). Pages work closely with the Legislative houses, Governor's office, and Court programs. The page program offers opportunities for a wide variety of delegates.

Page duties are broadly varied. They range from tasks such as assisting the Youth Governor to operational chores. Each job is vital to the efficient operation of the ML/C. The program is designed to provide students real life skills (interviewing and time management skills). The Page program models the administrative assistants found in most government and business offices.

The Page program is comprised of permanent and rotating positions. Permanent Pages will stay with their assignment for the duration of ML/C. Most of the Permanent Pages are selected through an interview process and handpicked by a youth leader. Roaming Pages' tasks will vary from day to day depending on the needs of the Legislative houses and Courts.

### **Forum**

The Forum is designed to give freshmen (9<sup>th</sup> grade) participants an introductory experience to the ML/C. Forum members form committees based on topics of interest. In these committees, members meet with subject matter experts who help them to create legislation. Forum members also choose additional roles within the Forum. They may run for office, lobby for bills, be a reporter, legislator or court member. These roles are the same as many of those in the larger ML/C, but are limited to those within the Forum program.

### **Political Parties**

Political Parties is a program area that teaches students about grassroots organizing and the political campaign process. Political Party Delegates design and implement strategies to promote their party ideals and recruit fellow students to register for their political party. Parties also endorse Officer Candidates and organize campaigns, rallies, and publicity stunts to help their candidates get elected.

The Political Party experience is best suited for students that possess a large amount of creativity, enthusiasm, and drive. Participants will learn how to prioritize, delegate, and manage projects in a fast-paced, high-pressure environment.

**Press Corps**

Being a reporter for the Model Legislature & Court offers a unique opportunity for delegates to see many aspects of the Model Legislature & Court program "up close and personal." Reporters can focus in on the details of a particular assignment and/or observe the larger picture of how everything fits, or doesn't fit, together.

Reporters can go lots of places and see lots of things. There are many opportunities to show-off their writing talent, flair for creativity, and humor.

**Broadcast Media**

The Broadcast Media produces and broadcasts three television programs through the hotels in Sacramento. These include daily news, information and entertainment segments. Participants serve as Reporters, Anchors, Producers, or Technical Crew.

## Adult Recognition Program

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Volunteer Staff may be nominated for special recognition awards. Selection of recipients is made by committees consisting of selected Advisors, Staff, Alumni Association members and/or former award recipients within each category.

### **The Michael White Spirit of Youth & Government Award**

This award is named after the late Michael J. White, who was the Program Director for Y&G from 1998 to 2001. With his character, leadership, and good humor, he inspired many to utilize their love of the program to touch the lives of others. Created by the Program Committee in 2001, this award recognizes participants from any area of the program (Delegates, Advisors, and Volunteer Staff) who have demonstrated a long-lasting commitment to the program and positively impacted the lives of others.

### **The Irvin C. Chapman Outstanding Service to Youth Award**

This award is presented to a non-delegate member of Youth & Government who has shown a longstanding dedication and commitment to the youth of this program. However, this is not an award for longevity alone. Past recipients have usually served the program in a variety of roles and continually performed above and beyond the call of duty.

### **The Outstanding Program Innovation or Development Award**

This award is occasionally presented to those who, within a particular program area, have made a substantial contribution to its innovation or development. Such contribution should have had a lasting and influential effect on Y&G. Therefore, the individual's contributions must have begun or been made at least 3 years prior to the award being presented. This award is selected by the ML/C Staff.

Beyond these awards, recognition of all our Volunteers is a high priority and we acknowledge outstanding service of each and every Volunteer!

## ML/C Glossary of "Y&G-isms"

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Many acronyms are used to describe Youth & Government programs, events and concepts. The following list details some of the more frequently used "Y&G-isms."

**California YMCA Youth & Government:** The official name of the organization.

Advisor	Adults who provide supervision of Delegates
BOB I (or T&E I)	November Training & Elections Conference at Camp Roberts, Paso Robles
Robles	
BOB II (or T&E II)	January Training & Elections Conference at Camp Roberts, Paso Robles
Camp Bob or BOB	Camp Roberts Army Camp Paso Robles
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CONA	Conference On National Affairs – Held in North Carolina
CON CON	State Constitutional Convention
Core Staff	Paid full or part time staff
Forum	Program for all 9 <sup>th</sup> grade Delegates
GA	General Assembly
IAC	International Affairs Commission
Intern	College-age participant serving in program areas
Lead Advisor	The adult in charge of a specific delegation
Lead Staff	Volunteer Staff Member who is in charge of a Program Area
Leg. An.	Legislative Analyst
ML/C	Model Legislature & Court
MUN	Model United Nations (Y&G's Junior High program)
NIC	National Issues Commission
NJC	National Judicial Competition
PAC	Political Action Committee
PC	Presiding Commissioner in NIC
Program Area	Specific groupings (i.e. Senate, Court, Political Parties, etc.)
Program Staff	Volunteer Staff running or assisting in Program Areas
SAC	Model Legislature & Court Program in Sacramento
Spring Conference	Primary event to recruit new high school students
Staff	Adult Volunteer/Program Area Staff
Y&G	Youth & Government