

Candidate Handbook

Running for Office in Y&G

Congratulations on your decision to run for office! The purpose of this pamphlet is to guide you through this tumultuous and rewarding process. This handbook is intended as a guide. For a complete list of election rules please see the Election Rules located on www.calymca.org.

Campaigning at Local YMCAs

As a candidate, you will have the opportunity to campaign at conferences as well as local YMCAs. Both are equally important. To campaign at a local YMCA, call the delegation president and make an appointment to attend an upcoming meeting. (Ask your advisor for the statewide list of contact information for delegations to get the phone number, or e-mail the Officers & Elections staff at elections@calymca.org) At the meeting, expect the opportunity to give a short speech on a topic of your choice and a brief question and answer session following. While it is not required, it is always a good idea to campaign in more formal attire.

Campaigning at Conferences

This is the formal part of your campaign. You must wear business attire during the Meet the Candidates Sessions (MTCs). All candidates will attend a brief meeting after the opening joint session to review the schedule. At this meeting, candidates are expected to turn in their campaign financial disclosure forms (more on that later in the pamphlet). Before the MTC's, you will have the opportunity to meet people and hand out promotional items as long as they are not leaflets, flyers, stick-on badges, or confetti (for a complete list of prohibited campaign items, INSERT WEBSITE URL HERE). During the opening Joint Convention, a slide show will introduce you along with other candidates running for your office. Do not campaign near the Election Polling Place. Don't hang signs outside of your barracks.

Meet the Candidate Sessions

The rules for the Meet the Candidate sessions will be closely observed. **All speeches will be limited to two minutes and will be timed.** Please time your speeches prior to the conference to ensure that your time does not elapse prior to your speech's conclusion. Time for each speaker begins after name and delegation are stated (which should be the first thing each speaker states). Each speech should be on an issue facing the state of California or related to why you are the best candidate. Some latitude will be granted on speech topics, but it is important that your speech maintains the dignity of the office for which you are running. The point of the speech is to display your public speaking skills as well as to inform your audience about your unique qualifications to hold the office for which you are running.. **Speeches that are off topic or inappropriate in nature will be stopped and the speaker's time will be yielded to the Chair.** After the speeches, candidates will address questions from the audience if time allows (at the discretion of the Secretary of State staff).

Important Rules for Elections

There are some very important rules for the election process in Y&G. Failure to abide by the stated rules may result in disqualification. Please see the Election Rules document for a complete list of candidate rules

- Your speech may be up to 2 minutes and will be timed. The Secretary of State will stop all speeches that exceed the allotted time.
- Your speech may be on an important issue to the state of California or related to why you would make a good candidate. Speeches must be respectful in tone. Inappropriate or silly speeches will not be tolerated, and will result in forfeiture of speaking time.

- Candidates whose elections span one conference will be allotted \$250 for their campaign. Candidates whose elections span two conferences will be allotted an additional \$150 for their second conference campaign, for a total of up to \$400. Candidates are not allowed to rollover funds from their first conference to increase their second conference allotment. While any transportation costs incurred while campaigning at local delegations does not count as an expense, please see the instructions attached to the Financial Disclosure Form for fees associated with delegation visits. Donated items DO count towards spending limits.
- All candidates will keep track of their campaign financing. Campaign Financial Disclosure Forms must be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of State by the end of the mandatory candidate session directly following opening joint session. Candidates must also attach a sample of any and all promotional material to the Office of the Secretary of State.
- All candidates must be in Sacramento Attire during all Meet the Candidates sessions. At Camp Roberts, dress shoes may be substituted for appropriate shoes for the environment. Failure to follow this rule will result in disqualification.

Promotional Items at the Conferences

No sticky backed or adhesive promotion badges

No confetti, small pieces of paper, or balloons

Candidates may hand out candy, pins, pencils, etc., but they cannot distribute anything that will add to the "litter" problem. NO GUM!

You will be required to supply a sample of each of your promotional campaign giveaways. Samples must be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of the mandatory candidate session directly following opening joint session.

You are required to attend a candidate's meeting immediately following the opening joint session. Please check the conference handbook for the exact times and locations.

5 Things You Should Know

Dress Accordingly – Dress up. You must be in Sacramento business attire during all Meet the Candidate Sessions. You stand out and people can easily recognize candidates in Sacramento dress code, it also helps delegates to understand what the dress code is.

Candidate Training – Be sure not to miss it immediately following the opening joint session at T&E. Location will be in the conference handbook.

Speeches – Have one. Time it. Make sure it's on topic. Memorize it if you can. (This makes you look good). Practice.

Meet the Candidate Sessions – These sessions are where you get to give your speech. You will have the chance to answer some serious (as well as some not-so-serious) questions from the audience.

Have fun – This is a once-in-a-lifetime thrill ride. Enjoy it.

A Word on Philosophy

Running for office in the California YMCA Youth & Government program is an honor. As a candidate, you gain statewide exposure in the program. People know your name. People recognize your face. Even before you are elected (or even if you aren't), delegates look to you as an example of how to conduct themselves at conferences. It is incumbent upon you to approach this responsibility with pride, humility, and a keen awareness of the power that you hold to influence others. Also know that you have a great support network. Your delegation and advisors are there to

encourage you and inspire you. The Officers & Elections staff is here to answer any and all questions you have, so please do not hesitate to reach out.

Through the years, many winning and losing candidates from the California YMCA Youth & Government program have served in top leadership positions in business and government. Much of the valuable experience that they gained was during the *process* of running for office, win or lose. Congratulations again on your decision to take part in this prestigious and rewarding process. Good luck!

Questions? Contact:

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