

NEVADA YOUTH LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE BUILDING

401 S. CARSON STREET

CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701-4747

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/NYL>

Senator Valerie Wiener (Ret.), *Chair*

Nevada Youth Legislature Board

Email: BoardChair@youthleg.state.nv.us

Tina Ashdown, *NYL Program Facilitator*

Email: info@youthleg.state.nv.us

(775) 684-6740 Fax: (775) 684-6750



Nevada Youth Legislature: Historical Perspective

The Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL), which was created in 2007 ([Senate Bill 247](#)), is a unique statewide youth leadership program. The NYL provides a distinctive opportunity for Nevada youth to have a voice in policy-making. To maximize this experience, the NYL program teaches and inspires young people how to lead and how to serve.

Each of the 21 Youth Legislators is appointed by his/her State Senator to represent the youth of that senatorial district. The number of under-18-year-old constituents per district ranges from 27,000 to 42,000 people. Youth Legislators engage these young people through town hall meetings, District Youth Advisory Councils (DYACs), and other constituent outreach opportunities. Youth Legislators also testify before public decision-making bodies and prepare and present ideas for legislation.

Youth Legislators are educated and supported at the highest level during their two-year terms with: an inaugural two-day training in Carson City, a midterm full-day training in Las Vegas, and monthly half-day trainings during each school year. The NYL also has the distinct opportunity to introduce a bill, which addresses an issue affecting Nevada youth, during the biannual legislative session. Five of seven measures the NYL has introduced have been signed into law; another six measures were carried by individual State Legislators, at the request of their Youth Legislators (five of these became law); and another measure was passed as a Senate Concurrent Resolution. Additionally, NYL alumni have worked with their State Senators to advance measures that they proposed during their NYL terms, such as a measure on financial literacy, which was introduced and passed in the 2017 Legislative Session.

NYL alumni involvement is also an important aspect of the program, and alumni serve as trainers, facilitators, and mentors. In addition, Nevada Legislators, representing the four caucuses, are engaged as group discussion leaders at most of the training sessions.

In 2011, the Legislature created the Board of Directors for Corporation for Public Benefit to Administer the NYL (NYL Board) ([Senate Bill 237](#)), which oversees the policies, practices, and finances of the NYL. Members of the seven-member NYL Board are appointed by the Legislative Commission and serve two-year terms. Typically, this membership comprises representatives from each house of the Legislature, NYL alumni, and the public. Since 2011, the NYL Board has awarded more than 40 annual scholarships to graduating Youth Legislators and NYL alumni.

The success of the NYL program emanates from the strong collaborative support from the Legislative Counsel Bureau, which involves human resources from the Research Division, the Legal Division, Broadcast Services, and others. Reflecting the success of this distinctive program, approximately 230 Nevada students have participated in the NYL program, and the NYL has earned 43 state, national, and international awards.