

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT TO ADMINISTER
THE NEVADA YOUTH LEGISLATURE (NYL BOARD)

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Nevada Youth Legislature Activities 2019–2020

1. Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL) Annual Report, 2019-2020

Written by Joanna Bieda, NYL Chair, 2019–2020, the *Nevada Youth Legislature Annual Report 2019–2020*, was submitted to the Governor on June 3, 2020. Others to receive this report include the NYL Board, the Legislative Committee on Education, and the 2021 Legislative Session. Details of the first year of the 2019–2021 Term, including the two-day training in Carson City in August 2019, as well as each subsequent training and/or meeting activity are explained.

2. Monthly Meetings/Trainings

Following the August 1 and 2, 2019, training in Carson City, each half-day training focused on providing Youth Legislators (YLS) with information about developing essential skill sets to ensure their success as YLS. These trainings involved instruction, Legislator-led discussion groups, Q&A with NYL alumni mentor-trainers (at the witness table or by telephone), paired activities with YLS and their guest District Youth Advisory Council (DYAC) members, role-playing, and more. Monthly training topics included: Constituent Outreach, Message Accountability Skills, Effective Listening Skills, Power Presentations, and Conducting Town Hall Meetings. The April training on Negotiation Skills was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, YLS were unable to elect their officers for the 2020–2021 year. This election will occur at the August 5, 2020, virtual meeting and full-day training.

3. Outside Activities

In addition to the monthly meetings/trainings during each school year, YLS are required to complete nine “outside activities.” YLS must complete and submit required reports about their activities, by pre-determined deadlines, to the Legislative Counsel Bureau and the NYL Board Chair. The required 2019–2020 activities included:

- 1) DYAC Meeting Plan—2019;
- 2) Submit Three Questions/Answers About Their Roles/Responsibilities as YLS—2019;
- 3) List of Appointed DYAC Members—2019;
- 4) DYAC Meeting and Report—2019;

- 5) Town Hall Meeting Plan—2020;
- 6) Town Hall Meeting Report—2020;
(NOTE: *The requirement to conduct a town hall meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*)
- 7) Individual YL’s Bill Draft Request—September 2020;
- 8) Testimony Before a Public Decision-Making Body and Report—November 2020; and
- 9) Outreach Letter Supporting NYL Program—January 2021.

Accountability is important in the NYL Program. The *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) require that, if a YL accumulates three full UNexcused “activity credits,” this student shall be released from the NYL program. Meetings/trainings equal one full credit; outside activities equal one-half credit. (NOTE: To receive an excused absence from a required meeting/training, the YL must notify the NYL Board Chair within 24 hours preceding a training/meeting or within seven days following that training/meeting.)

During the first year of the 2019–2021 Term, one YL resigned before attending her first meeting in September 2019 and two YLs were released from the program in February 2020, as required by NRS. Senator Dallas Harris appointed a new YL to fill the vacancy in Senate District 11 in February 2020. Senator Pete Goicoechea has not yet filled the vacancy for Senate District 19. Senator Joseph (Joe) P. Hardy’s Senate District 12 appointee began his service in January 2020. Also, one YL graduated in May 2020. Therefore, currently, the NYL has 19 Youth Legislators in good standing.

4. Additional Activities and Involvement

In addition to required activities, YLs made important contributions, as YLs, in other meaningful ways during 2019–2020. These included:

- Youth Legislator Alexia Carver represented the NYL, as a consulting member, to work with the Nevada Association of Student Councils to nominate a student member to the State Board of Education on March 24, 2020.
- Youth Legislator Kamieko Goines was recognized as one of two student member finalists to the State Board of Education on March 17, 2020.
- In response to COVID-19 shelter-in-place requirements, several YLs participated in a civic-engagement activity provided to them electronically by Senator Wiener on March 19, 2020. This activity included describing something positive that they have learned or experienced; how they feel about it; and how they, as leaders, can use this knowledge to make a positive contribution to their community.
- Vice Chair Alex Wong submitted an article to the *Las Vegas Sun*, which was published on May 5, 2020, to address public education needs and plans for School Year 2020–2021.

- Chair Joanna Bieda was elected to serve as the Nevada Chair of the High School Democrats of America on May 18, 2020.

5. Miscellaneous Business

National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

In August 2019, Senator Wiener represented the NYL program, as a panelist on “Youth Leadership Programs in Legislatures” at the NCSL Summit in Nashville, Tennessee.

Awards

Between 2008 and 2019, the NYL earned 43 awards from Communicator Awards, Communitas Awards, Hermes Creative Awards, MarCom Awards, National Federation of Press Women, and Nevada Press Women. Since 2019, the NYL has earned an additional eight awards from Communitas, Hermes Creative Awards, and Communicator Awards. This brings our total, since 2008, to 51 Awards.