

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mid-Year Meeting
January 13, 2021
Senator Valerie Wiener (Ret.), Chair

AGENDA ITEM IV: SCHOLARSHIPS 2021–2022

Applications for the 2021–2022 Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL) Scholarship cycle will be uploaded by February 1, 2021. Scholarships for the upcoming year are:

- \$1,000 Senator Valerie Wiener NYL Scholarship;
- \$1,000 NYL Scholarship;
- \$500 Senator Joyce Woodhouse NYL Scholarship; and
- \$500 Jon (and Tara) Oglesby NYL Alumni Scholarship *

* QUESTION: Former Youth Legislator Oglesby has requested that his wife's name also be included in the name of the scholarship. Historically, the only names included in NYL Scholarships have been those of people directly affiliated with the program (e.g., NYL Board, Legislative Counsel Bureau [LCB] staff, former Youth Legislators).

AGENDA ITEM V: NYL MEETINGS/TRAININGS AND OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES, 2020–2021

MONTHLY MEETINGS/TRAININGS

As reported at the June 24, 2020, NYL Board meeting, Youth Legislators (YLS) accepted the challenges of the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic with a profound commitment to themselves and the NYL program. We enjoyed 100 percent attendance (19 YLS) at the May 7, 2020, optional two-hour zoom conversation. In addition, ALL of the following zoom meetings/trainings have involved a 100 percent attendance (with one 2021 graduate, the NYL now has 18 YLS):

- September 2, 2020—Election of 2021–2022 NYL chair and vice chair; half-day Mid-Term training on BDR Development;
- October 13, 2020—BDR Review and Selection Meeting/Training (from 18 BDRs to 7 to 2); and
- November 19, 2020—Hearings on the two final BDRs and selection of the NYL bill proposal to be introduced during the 2021 Nevada Legislative Session.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Since the June 24, 2020, NYL Board meeting, ALL YLs prepared and submitted bill draft requests (BDRs) to be considered by their colleagues at the October 13 and November 19 NYL meetings (See Attachment: NYL BDRs).

YLs were also required to submit reports on “Testimony Before a Public Decision-Making Body” in November. Participation options were expanded from the traditional in-person testimonies (which we told them NOT to do) to include the possibility of virtual, telephonic, email, and written. YLs provided their testimonies to such entities as: Legislative committees, the Economic Forum, Washoe and Clark County School Boards, the Library and Museum Board, various commissions, and more. YLs who were unable to complete this outside activity will have an opportunity to make up this one-half activity credit. In March 2021, all YLs will be invited to submit written testimony to support the NYL bill during its hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

AGENDA ITEM VIII: NYL DAY AT THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE

March 16, 2021, has been selected as NYL Day at the Nevada Legislature. Many scheduling and logistical variables will affect how this unfolds. Activities currently/tentatively planned—whether totally virtual, in-person with social distancing, or a combination—include:

- Attendance during Senate floor session. Majority Leader will read a prepared floor statement that provides historical perspective of NYL. Tentatively, the Majority Leader will “officially present” graduation cords to the NYL graduating seniors. Not yet sure, due to timing, if YLs will also be able to attend a complementary experience in the Assembly.
- Lunch break.
- Attendance at, as well as participation in, Senate Judiciary Committee. NYL Chair Hailemeskel and YL Melendez will present the NYL’s bill, which addresses racial equity in the juvenile justice system. YLs’ written testimonies will be presented for submission to the hearing record and, possibly, Senator Wiener will read excerpts from several statements for the record.
- Debriefing and discussion of worksheets related to the Senate Judiciary Committee’s processing of NYL bill.
- If a version of “in person” is possible, the day will conclude with the traditional carrot cake. Whatever the gathering format, YLs will share how the day’s experiences impacted them.

AGENDA ITEM IX: RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH

The only remaining outside activity is the “Outreach Recruitment Letter” for which we have provided a template that specifies what we would like YLs to include in their correspondence. They are required to send this letter to the adult sponsors of at least two youth leadership organizations (preferably, outside their schools). We have learned that YLs are often the most powerful recruiters for the NYL program, and we are eager to see the impact of these letters during the 2021–2023 NYL Term recruitment period.

LEGISLATORS’ ASSISTANCE NEEDED

During this time of COVID-19, NYL recruitment efforts need to be more creative than ever before. One outlet, secured by Senator Wiener, will involve working with the Public Education Foundation (Clark County) rosters of former participants in both the Teacher Leader Academy and the Executive Leadership Academy. How can we engage Legislators at a higher level in recruitment? What other outreach channels does the Board suggest?

2021–2023 NYL APPLICATION

The 2021–2023 NYL application will include new language for parents/guardians and principals to affirm with their signatures, which addresses their support for the applicants and their level of involvement. This regularly includes missing portions of school days to participate in required NYL meetings/trainings. In addition, we are removing references to the District Youth Advisory Council (DYAC). This activity is being removed from the NYL program, as recommended by LCB, due to “limited oversight capacities.” In addition, due to these same challenges, YL Town Hall Meetings will only be held in school settings or environments.

MISCELLANEOUS AND GOING FORWARD:

AWARDS

Between 2008 and 2019, the NYL earned 46 awards from Communicator Awards, Communitas Awards, Hermes Creative Awards, MarCom Awards, National Federation of Press Women, and Nevada Press Women. Six awards earned in 2020 include: Communicator Awards, Communitas Awards, Hermes Creative Awards, and MarCom Awards. This brings our total, since 2008, to 52 awards.

THANK YOU

A special thank-you to the LCB staff for an extraordinary 13-plus years of exemplary support, which has made all of this possible. This phenomenal team of professionals, including Constituent Services, Legal, Broadcast and Production Services, Legislative Police, and others, consistently provides the highest level of expertise and dedication to ensure that the NYL is one of the premier youth leadership programs in the nation.