

**Delegates, Advisors, Parents, Volunteers, and more,**

Welcome to the first ever Oregon Youth and Government newsletter, presented by the Press Corps! Press as a whole strives to provide information and updates on anything happening in the YAG community, and what better way to do that than a monthly newsletter. Found in your inbox and the Wild Apricot website, this newsletter will provide you with all of the Oregon Youth and Gov. updates your heart desires.

**Introduction of Press Corps**

Though the tumultuous weather made for a first-ever hybrid YAG conference in the nation, another first came when the Oregon Press Corps made its debut during the 2023 conference. Using the @oryagpress Instagram, members provided live updates on the status of bills and highlighted different events happening at the conference. It was a very successful first year and will only get better! We are hoping to grow the Press Corps in numbers and delegations in future years.

Governor Kylie Johnson believes, "Press Corps is an essential component of democracy and our YAG community. From articles spotlighting our very own delegates to a monthly newsletter, Press adds another dimension to the program." Press helps with expanding the program across the state, informing the Oregon community about what Youth and Government does and why it's important, as well as getting more people involved with the program in ways other than writing and debating bills.

The Press Corps experience is "inclusive, encouraging, and fun," says Elizabeth Pinkerton, West Salem Delegation. Those involved in Press get a perspective from the delegates that no one else has. Additionally, Press provides the public with a sneak peek at the passionate, innovative high schoolers involved in YAG. It's an extremely unique experience and a great community. The plans for the Press Corps are big and exciting, including the creation of a YouTube channel and the start of this monthly newsletter.

If you are interested in writing articles, creating Instagram posts, taking pictures, or interviewing delegates, click the link below and fill out the survey so we can get you more information on joining the Press Corps!

<https://forms.gle/kz4qnhaDcSBJBUE49>

## **78th Youth Governor Election**

Another one of the many positives to come from our conference was the election of our 78th Youth Governor, Kylie Johnson. A sophomore at Sherwood High School, Kylie has already made a positive impact in the Oregon community. A few weeks ago, she spoke to more than 80 eighth and ninth graders involved in 4H programs about the value of Youth and Government. Additionally, she spoke virtually to West Salem High School's Environmental Club about fast fashion, fighting climate change, and greenwashing, all through the power of advocacy.

When asked about how she was feeling after being elected Youth Governor, she said "I am feeling a million things at once: grateful, happy, relieved, overwhelmed, hopeful, the list goes on. Most of all, YAG and the extraordinary people involved make me overjoyed; I've been all smiles the past few days!" Furthermore, she said the biggest change to expect in the YAG community is "...increased connection and engagement with the program outside of Conference."

It is evident that Governor Johnson is incredibly passionate about Youth and Government, and will continue to make more positive contributions to the community. With campaign goals including program growth, connection with delegates during the offseason, and providing more opportunities for civic engagement, YAG is in good hands under her leadership. Congratulations, Kylie Johnson!

## **Further Opportunities**

If you're not quite sick of Oregon YAG yet, there are a few more exciting opportunities to show your support for this incredible community, as well as reconnect and reflect on this past year.

On April 11th, 4:30-6:00 PM, there will be an advocacy opportunity for anyone interested in telling state officials why programs like YAG are so important and should be made a top priority. The Expanding Afterschool & Summer Experiences Virtual Town Hall will show our dedication and care for YAG, influencing those who have the power to make changes. This is especially important as a bill is currently going through the Joint Committee on Ways and Means ([SB531A](#)) that would greatly benefit YAG and provide

the funding we need. [Register here](#) and include "YMCA Youth and Government" in your name on Zoom to represent Oregon YAG and advocate for our program.

## **Post-Conference Meet Up**

Additionally, all delegates are welcome to attend a Post-Conference Meet Up at the Salem Family YMCA on April 29th, from 12:30-3:30. The meet-up will be an opportunity for delegates to reconnect and look back on the conference, as well as find new information about exciting opportunities for leadership within YAG. Join us to hang out and have fun together. More information to come as we approach this event. We hope to see you there!

## **Conference on National Affairs (CONA)**

Although the post-conference event marks the end of the Oregon Youth and Government season, it is important to note that opportunities for Civic Engagement are everywhere you look. In addition to the Virtual Town Hall taking place on April 11th, this summer features an exciting opportunity through the YMCA at a national level.

CONA, or Conference on National Affairs, provides a week-long opportunity for delegates to "do research in the area of National and International concern; to organize this information into a documents proposal; to engage in intensive discussion and to debate these proposals with understanding young people from other states" (@orygov on Instagram). Last year, more than 30 states sent delegates to the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, North Carolina, with this year poised to feature even more.

West Salem delegate and Youth Speaker of the House Cady Wood attended CONA last year, and said, "CONA is an experience of a lifetime; it provides so many opportunities to learn more about people, politics and parliamentary procedure. Without CONA, I can wholeheartedly say that I wouldn't be the person I am today."

Those interested in becoming more civically involved and meeting with like-minded individuals from all across the country should take advantage of this incredible opportunity. Pre-Registration is due on April 15th and can [be found here](#). Additional information can be found on both the @orygov Instagram page and the [YMCA CONA website](#).

That's it for our first ever edition of the Oregon Youth and Government monthly newsletter. If you have any information you think should be included in next month's edition, please feel free to DM us on Instagram @oryagpress.

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