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East Bay YMCA Teens to take on legislative challenges in Sacramento

Part of A Celebration Youth & Government at the 21st Annual VIP Day in Sacramento

OAKLAND, CA – February 9, 2012 – As part of a statewide movement to educate young leaders about the importance and opportunities of serving their community, the YMCA of the East Bay annually participates in the California YMCA's Model Legislature and Court program, also known as Youth & Government.

Youth & Government is a six-month program in which high-school aged delegates, (9th - 12th grades) role play the various positions of the California State Legislature and the State Court systems. Students participate by joining local YMCA delegations. Within these delegations, they create bills to be submitted to the Model Legislature, research and practice court cases, and attend the three annual Model Legislature & Court conferences, culminating in a four-day conference in Sacramento. This year more than one hundred high school students from all of the East Bay YMCA's branches will join more than 2,000 fellow California delegates at the 64th Annual session in Sacramento, CA February 16-20, 2012.

Student delegates will welcome program sponsors and special guests (school superintendents, local elected officials and Y supporters) to witness the program in action at the 21st Annual VIP Day on Friday, February 17 at the Sheraton Grande in Sacramento, CA.

VIP Day guests get a tour of a model legislature and court program, and observe youth delegates from Ys' throughout California as they discuss and debate legislative proposals and judicial issues in the actual chambers of the State Capitol and State Court buildings in Sacramento. The young leaders and guests attend a luncheon with current and former elected state representatives, including former Governor George Deukmejian who heads the YMCA Scholarship Endowment Fund.

YMCA Youth and Government is a statewide program sponsored by the Y that involves thousands of teens in a state-optimized, model-government program.



Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in an exercise around experiential civic engagement.

“This is a solid civic program that gives our youth an opportunity to live out many of the experiences they would have, should they chose to enter a legislative career,” said Robert Wilkins, President & CEO of the YMCA of the East Bay. Wilkins explained that participating teens meet throughout the year to discuss and debate issues that affect citizens of their state, and actually review proposed legislation. The program culminates with teens serving as delegates at the Model Legislature and Court conference, with an opportunity debate bills in the state capitol.

About the East Bay Y System:

The YMCA of the East Bay is one of Northern California's largest trainers and deployers of volunteers. Last year the East Bay YMCA trained more than 500 volunteers in programs ranging from childcare to teen enrichment, health and wellness and cultural harmony. With nine branches and almost 50 childcare centers in operation from Fremont to the Oregon border, the East Bay YMCA Association also has the largest geographic reach of any YMCA operation in North America. Formed as a 501 (c) (3) corporation on July 20, 1879, the not-for-profit East Bay YMCA operates branches in downtown Oakland, Fremont, Newark, Hayward, Castro Valley, Richmond, and Dublin, as well as camps in Livermore, Pescadero (San Mateo County) and Redway (Humboldt County). All locations are for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

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