

Youth Leadership Academy 2010-2011

Program Outline and Goals

What is the purpose of the Youth Leadership Academy?

YLA is a program to encourage creative thinking around the dual roles of leadership and service in light of the Christian faith and Episcopal tradition. We are called to be servant leaders, modeling to those around us the life-giving and transformative power of Christ Risen, seeking to create the kingdom of God in the here and now, and not just wait for others to do it for us. Bringing our talents and time and treasure to the Table, we will learn to work together and to create the vision of Shalom (God's Peace) in our own communities and parishes. YLA is a chance for our young people to do this work together and to walk alongside each other as we encounter both the challenges and joys of trying on different forms of leadership.

YLA also strives to instill an understanding of the Christian faith in participants. Spiritual practice, prayer, and engagement with scripture contribute to our understanding of why we lead, and what our end goals are. We lead to serve, and by serving faithfully and openly, we model Christian social justice and love.

What are we going to do for the rest of the YLA Program?

There are three major parts of the YLA Program:

- Parish Project
- Mission Trip Fundraising
- Mission Trip

We spend the first part of the year working on a viable, construction project which happens in the parish community of each YLA-er. Goal-making, priority-setting, relationship-building and networking are all part of this process, as is ongoing conversation with the clergy and leadership of the parish.

Beginning in December, we start to talk about fundraising and how to do it effectively and comfortably. The goal is not the money itself in many ways (although it's tougher to buy plane tickets with it!): it is about learning how to communicate to others how the YLA-ers participation in the mission trip is about furthering God's Mission for us—to truly belong and witness to the Body of Christ throughout the world.

We have historically gone on our mission trip during the second week in August. The mission trip usually lasts for 1 week, and we would hope to do both pilgrimage, physical work, and community building. In the past years, we have gone to El Salvador for our mission trip, but we will not have a definite destination until December.

What do we expect from participants?

The best thing that any YLA-er and their parents and mentors can do is to make some 'due dates' and live by them! Throughout this program, you will be asked to do a lot of work on your own. YLA Leaders will be available to help you make some decisions, to be a sounding board and to generally pump you up for your own work with your parish, but we will not be watching over every step you make! This will take some self-initiative on your own part to step up and to hold yourself responsible for various tasks. It will NOT be up to your parents or mentors either, they are there to help you out!

Project Planning

- ✓ While in the YLA, you will plan, develop and give leadership to others in a project that will be helpful to your parish.
- ✓ The project plan should be approved by your parish priest or youth minister and by the YLA Mentors .

Originality

- ✓ Does your leadership project have to be original, perhaps something you dream up that has never done before? No, but it certainly could be.
- ✓ You may pick a project that has been done before, but you are responsible for:
 - Planning
 - Directing
 - Following it through to the end

Limitations

- ✓ The project may not be performed for an individual or be a fund-raiser.

Size

- ✓ How big a project is required? There are no specific requirements as long as the project is helpful to your parish. The amount of time spent by you in planning your project and the actual working time spent in carrying out the project should be as much as is necessary for you to demonstrate your leadership or others to your home church community.

Before you start, ask yourself:

Am I passionate about this project?

What about this project speaks to me and to my community?

Who will benefit from this project? How will they benefit?

Is this a truly DO-ABLE project?

How many people will I have to engage to help with this project for it to come to fruition?

How am I serving my community through this project?