

ANNUAL REPORT

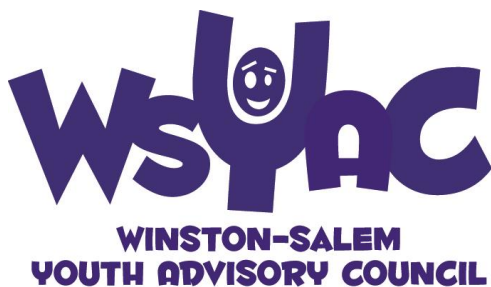
Fiscal Year 2024-2025



Winston-Salem



CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL



Staff Administrator:

Dr. Ronnie Christian

Interim Human Relations Director

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Attachment A: Winter Newsletter

Attachment B: Highlights from the 2024-2025 year including SYC Conferences and National League of Cities City Summit – Atlanta, GA and Congressional Cities Conference – Washington, DC

Attachment C: State Youth Council Conference Overview and Calendar

Attachment D: State Youth Council Spring Convention Flyer and Agenda

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Council is to give the youth an opportunity to become more aware of local government and become involved in the community by participating in community activities a minimum of 40 hours each year.

MISSION

Serve as a conduit between city government and younger constituents. The Youth Council's core focus is youth civic engagement by way of community programming, youth-oriented activities, contribution of at least 40 volunteer hours per school year to government-related initiatives, projects, and programs, dissemination of information to the community regarding topics that are important and relevant to the youth in our community, and to advise the City Council and the Human Relations/Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Department on matters that relate to the community's youth population.

HISTORY

In March of 1989, the former Winston-Salem City Council unanimously approved a resolution to establish a Youth Advisory Council. The purpose of the Youth Advisory Council, as outlined in 1989, is to provide the City Council with recommendations on a variety of subjects and to give youth the opportunity to become more aware of local government. At that time, the City Council stated that the Youth Advisory Council should be diverse, inclusive, and representative of the Winston-Salem high school student population.

In May of 1989, nineteen members began a one-year term of service as the original Youth Advisory Council under the direction of the Recreation and Parks Department. In June of 2010, the Youth Advisory Council was reorganized under the Human Relations Department by resolution of the City Council.

DUTIES

- (1) Actively promoting the participation of the youth in city government programs and activities;
- (2) Promoting positive human relations among all youth;
- (3) Providing channels of communication among all populations;
- (4) Encouraging youth to become better trained and qualified for employment opportunities;
- (5) Performing duties consistent with general law as may be assigned it from time to time by the City Council; and
- (6) Performing such other duties as necessary to enforce the powers assigned to it.

THE COUNCIL'S RELATIONSHIP TO CITY GOVERNMENT

The government of the City of Winston-Salem and the general management and control of all its affairs are vested in the City Council and the Mayor. The City Council appoints the City Manager who is the administrative head of City government and is responsible for the administration of all departments of City government. The City Council is also the appointing authority for members of the Youth Advisory Council.

The Council keeps the City Manager, and the City Council informed of its activities. To further that communication, the chairperson or a designated member of the Council shall appear annually before the City Council to provide them with information on the pulse of the youth community and a yearly progress report on Council programs and projects.

The Council makes recommendations to the City Council concerning projects and programs relevant to the youth of Winston-Salem.

THE COUNCIL'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE STAFF

The Council's relationship with the Human Relations staff involves advising staff regarding youth-oriented and youth-developed programs, concerns, and issues. During the process of initiating programs and conducting youth outreach, the Youth Advisory Council calls on the staff for technical assistance and research into matters.

THE COUNCIL'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY

The Youth Advisory Council is the body through which youth concerns can be relayed to City officials. The Youth Advisory Council brings information to its peers on the happenings of city government that pertain to the youth.

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL 2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

School	First Name	Last Name
Atkins High School	Veda	Sanka
Atkins High School	Maddisun	Davis
Early College	Cristofer	Gallardo-Acevedo
Early College	Athena	Perez-Perez
Early College	Jada	Taylor
East Forsyth High School	Kennedy	Wicker
Kennedy High School	Samira	Peake
Mount Tabor High School	Shaunice	Butler
NC Leadership Academy	Wenda	McLaurin

Reagan High	Ava	Banner
West Forsyth	Maria	Efremov

MANAGEMENT'S COMMENTS

DR. RONNIE CHRISTIAN, HUMAN RELATIONS INTERIM DIRECTOR

The Human Relations Department is very pleased to serve as the administering department of the Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council. The mission of the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is to serve as a conduit between the city government and younger constituents. The Youth Council's core focus is youth civic engagement by way of community programming and youth-oriented activities; a contribution of at least 40 volunteer hours per school year to government-related initiatives, projects, and programs; the dissemination of information to the community regarding topics that are important and relevant to the youth in our community; and to advise the City



Council and the Human Relations Department on matters that relate to the community's youth population.

The YAC's purpose is to provide a venue for youth between the ages of 14-18 to have an active means of civic engagement in local government.

Although the YAC was established in 1989 under the leadership of Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian H. Burke, the Human Relations Department was designated as the administering department for the YAC in June 2010. Since that time, the YAC has been restructured to enhance its focus and goals. Specifically, each member of the YAC has been charged with fulfilling 40 hours of community service during the school year. To that end, each month focuses on a different topic that relates to the YAC's mission and the community at-large. Topics have included civics, government, housing, and the environment.

The YAC has thrived this year and has established itself as a welcome youth voice in the community. Their hard work has been recognized by the Winston-Salem Foundation's Youth Grantmakers and the State of North Carolina by way of competitive funding for their annual project. We are excited to continue to see the YAC flourish in the future. Even in the face of the historic global COVID-19 pandemic, the YAC persevered with having virtual monthly meetings; being awarded a grant from the State of North Carolina Youth Council, and leading a successful annual youth community leadership project, which included organizing mental health care bags for high school students.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

I. Goal: Community Education

- Gain better knowledge of community issues, organizations, and services.

MONTHLY FOCUS/PRESENTATIONS	
August/September - Orientation and Planning Focus: Annual Service Project Planning	February - Human Relations Focus: Youth Grantmakers in Action Community Service Project Planning
October - Civic Engagement Presentation	March/April - Community Partnerships
November - Local Government	May - End of Year Project Planning and Wrap-Up
December/January - Homelessness Awareness	


II. Goal: Community Service and Volunteerism

- Participate in 40 hours each of community activities and service.
 - Estimated total: 600
- Connect to youth population by planning, creating, and disseminating quarterly written publication.
 - See attachment A.
- Produce an annual project that is a benefit to the community.
 - The Council received a \$500 grant from the State Youth Council to help fund the annual project.

III. Goal: City Government Participation: Gain knowledge of city government processes by interfacing with city government officials.

MEETING PURPOSE	CITY OFFICIAL(S)
Annual Report Presentation	CDHGG Committee of City Council (May 12th, 2025)
Attending City Council Meeting	City Council
Attend National League of Cities City Summit	City Council

2024-2025 MAJOR PROGRAM /PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Annual Project:** The 2024-2025 Annual project was focused on collecting new and gently used clothing to donate to the victims of Hurricane Helene located in Western North Carolina. YAC partnered with the WS/FC School System and other local agencies for collection. Youth councils attending the SYC Spring Convention hosted by YAC were also asked to bring items of clothing.
 - **State Youth Council Involvement:** The Youth Advisory Council applied for a State Youth Council state grant and was awarded \$500 to use towards hosting the State Youth Council Spring Convention. Council members also attended 3 of the 4 SYC conferences: Leadership Day Conference in Raleigh, NC, Mini-grant Conference in Rocky Mount, NC, and Team Building Conference in Salisbury, NC. Hosting the final conference of the year was a chance for members of the council to learn valuable skills including time management, event planning and conflict resolution.
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- **Human Relations Student Awards Banquet:** The 45th Annual Human Relations Student Awards Ceremony is held every year to recognize students for their service in the areas of compassion, community service or cultural awareness. The Youth Advisory Council served as greeters and ushers for this event.
 - **City Officials:** Youth Advisory Council members attend and observe two City Council meetings each year. They were also youth delegates at the National League of Cities City Summit held in Tampa, FL and the Congressional Cities Conference held in Washington, DC.

WINSTON-SALEM YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL 2025-2026 OUTLINE OF GOALS

For the fiscal year of 2025-2026, the goals of the Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council will focus on the following goals:

1. To maintain and encourage use of the Youth Expression Wall;
2. To meet the requirements of the State Youth Council as a chartered member and to increase the YAC's presence on the state level;

3. To continue learning about the community through presentations at monthly meetings;
4. To find ways to connect to students outside of YAC through social media and in person;
5. To continue the YAC newsletter; and
6. To complete an end-of-year project for the 2025-2026 school year.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

The Youth Advisory Council recognizes the need to continue fostering an environment that initiates and supports multiracial and multi-ethnic dialogue and understanding in the youth community. We respectfully request your support in the following recommendations:

1. The Youth Advisory Council recognizes the importance of building and maintaining effective lines of communication between the city government and the youth community. By improving the dialogue with our diverse community groups, city government can ensure that the City of Winston-Salem fosters an environment that is conducive to an atmosphere in which the youth voice is heard. In carrying out its strategic goals, the Youth Advisory Council will **increase its outreach efforts in all areas of the community and will seek input from the City Council on issues or concerns in their respective wards.**
2. We ask that the City Council **support the Youth Advisory Council's goal of building a stronger relationship with City officials.**

The Youth Advisory Council greatly appreciates the continual support it has received from the City Council.