

# YAKETY YAC NEWS

Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council

## YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TO HOST STATE YOUTH COUNCIL SPRING CONVENTION

The State Youth Council (SYC), a program of the NC Council for Women & Youth Involvement Office, is the statewide coordinating agency interested in the development of Youth Councils. It works to foster the development of responsible leadership among youth through involvement in community affairs and in decision-making processes at all levels of government and provide a voice for North Carolina youth.

Each year, four conferences are sponsored by SYC. Service-Learning Conference Day generally convenes in September. Its primary foci is to provide opportunities that would enable young people to successfully complete their developmental tasks. In November students attend the Mini-Grant Conference. This conference, initiated by the Youth Advisory Council in 1977, gives youth an opportunity to develop program ideas, write grant proposals, screen grants submitted by youth groups, and implement defined program objectives. The Team-building Leadership Conference, held in January teaches youth essential skills: cooperation, communication and teamwork. This event shows how groups function and how individuals contribute to group success.

During the month of May, youth councils assemble to wrap up the various service they have done throughout the year. Meetings are held to conduct the closing business and elect officers. This is also a time to celebrate youth councils and their individual members. Awards given include the Most Diverse Council, Most Outstanding Council, Most Outstanding Member, Service Project of the Year, in addition to recognizing graduating seniors. Our Youth Advisory Council is excited to be hosting the 2025 SYC Spring Convention in our wonderful city from April 11-13, 2025. With plans for activities to honor the rich history and culture of the city, attendees will be sure to leave with an appreciation of the city known for Arts & Innovation.



YAC members at the 2023 Spring Convention in Wilmington, NC



YAC members at the 2024 Spring Convention in Concord, NC



State Youth Council at the 2024 Spring Convention in Concord, NC



Top: NLC Youth Delegation



Middle: WS YAC at Youth Delegates Reception



Bottom: Youth Representatives presenting to the Council on Youth, Education, and Families

## YAC TAKES ON TAMPA

by: Ava Banner, Reagan High School

Youth Advisory Council members had the pleasure of attending the National League of Cities City Summit as representatives of our city Winston Salem, North Carolina. Attending the 2024 100th anniversary of the organization's lifetime during the dates of November 11 to November 13th, youth delegates had the opportunity to experience workshops, guest speakers and local attractions providing a meaningful enrichment opportunity. Workshops focusing on debating, team working, government, and organization skills were enjoyed amongst the all attendees. During these workshops, YAC's delegates were able to socialize and meet other youth delegates from many nationwide states. Such as Colorado, Massachusetts, even another North Carolina youth advisory council, which is located in Monroe.

During the opening session that took place November 13th in the Tampa Bay one prominent guest speaker made a notable appearance, that being the mayor of Tampa, FL: Jane Castor. She began her interview, coined at the beginning as her "fireside chat", where she touched upon the many difficulties and triumphs she experienced as mayor during her current five years of service. Amongst the list of guest speakers such as Tampa's Mayor Jane Castor, the president of NLC, David Sander and CEO, Clarence E. Anthony all were present during the opening session.

Outside of the convention center focused activities, youth delegates were given opportunities to explore the historic sector of the city. Focused in Ybor City, many times the Streetcars, a free form of transport upheld by FDOT funding, was used as both transport and a sightseeing opportunity. The streetcars run on a 2.4-mile-long track and on the second night the streetcars were used as a mode of transportation to the Florida Aquarium. The aquarium was by far the most enjoyed event of the conference, as many interactive and beautiful environments were presented at the aquarium. Overall, the NLC City Summit trip was a phenomenal enrichment experience, that allowed for networking, exploration and learning.

## YAC & CAB Get a Legislative Refresher

by: Jada Taylor, Early College



Top: YAC members outside of the Legislative Building in Raleigh, NC

Bottom: Members of YAC & CAB pose along with HR/DEI staff members in the foyer of the Governor's mansion

During early autumn, the Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council had the privilege of visiting: the Governor's Mansion, the NC State Capitol, and the Legislative Building, with the College Advisory Board. The visit to the Governor's Mansion in Raleigh offered a unique opportunity to explore North Carolina's rich history and government. The North Carolina Executive Mansion, located in the heart of downtown Raleigh, has served as the official residence of the state's governors since 1891. With its grand architecture and historic furnishings, the mansion offers a glimpse into the lives of North Carolina's political leaders over the past century. We were able to tour the mansion and admire the elegant rooms, including the Governor's Office and the formal dining room, and learn about the state's political history, art, and traditions.

Just a short walk from the mansion, the North Carolina State Capitol and the Legislative Building offered a deeper look into the state's legislative processes. The State Capitol, a beautiful example of Greek Revival architecture, houses the chambers where North Carolina's General Assembly once met. Although the legislature now convenes in the modern Legislative Building, the Capitol remains a popular site for tours, with its preserved legislative chambers and historical exhibits. The nearby Legislative Building provides a more contemporary setting for visitors to observe the workings of the General Assembly, including committee meetings and legislative sessions.

Together, these sites offered a comprehensive look at the state's past and present political life and gave YAC the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the rich history of our state.

## Students Vote To Allocate Grant Funds

by: Cristofer Gallardo, Early College

In 2023, I, Cristofer Gallardo-Acevedo, had the privilege of joining the Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council. Just a few days ago, I attended the State Youth Council's Mini-Grant conference. During the conference, we were divided into groups with other councils to discuss annual projects proposed by cities across North Carolina. We decided whether to fully fund, partially fund, or deny funding through thoughtful debate.

As someone who had not previously attended a Mini-Grant conference, this experience was very eye opening. It provided me with diverse perspectives from individuals with different backgrounds and beliefs. Ultimately, we were able to allocate \$6,000 to support annual projects.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time over those three days. Hearing the passion and ideas of the future generation left me excited and optimistic about what lies ahead.



Left: YAC members attend the 2024 SVC Mini-Grant Conference in Rocky Mount, NC

Middle: YAC members argue for and against funding for grants.

Right: YAC members argue for and against funding for grants.

## 2024-2025 Winston-Salem Youth Advisory Council

Atkins High School Maddison Davis, Veda Sanka  
 Early College—Cristofer Gallardo, Athena Perez Perez, Jada Taylor  
 East Forsyth High School - Kennedy Wicker  
 Kennedy High School - Samira Peake  
 Mount Tabor High—Shaunice Butler, Fatou Lo  
 NC Leadership Academy - Wenda McLaurin  
 Reagan High School—Ava Banner  
 Reynolds High School - Sally Alcantara  
 West Forsyth High School - Maria Efremov,

City Council: Mayor Allen Joines; Denise D. Adams, Mayor Pro Tempore, North Ward; Barbara Hanes Burke, Northeast Ward; Robert C. Clark, West Ward; Vivian V. Joiner, South Ward; Regina Ford Hall, Northwest Ward; Scott Andree-Bowen, Southwest Ward; Annette Scippio, East Ward; James Taylor, Jr., Southeast Ward; City Manager: W. Patrick Pate

## Human Relations/Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Department, Staff YAC Advisors

Dr. Ronnie Christian, Interim Director

Erika Simon, Outreach Analyst