

**STATE OF IOWA YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL  
&**



**IOWA YOUTH CONGRESS  
APPLICATION  
2014**

**APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY MAY 1, 2014 RECEIVE PRIORITY CONSIDERATION  
ALL APPLICATIONS DUE ON JUNE 15, 2014**

The following three pages describe both the State Of Iowa Youth Advisory Council and the Iowa Youth Congress in detail. The last three pages are the application. Please review and understand the descriptions prior to completing the application.



## **DESCRIPTION**

**Iowa Code section 216A.140.8:** *A state of Iowa youth advisory council is created to provide input to the Governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers on youth issues. The purpose of the youth advisory council is to foster communication among a group of engaged youth and the Governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth.*

The **State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC)** is a non-partisan policy advising organization comprised of 21 voting members and three non-voting members. In 2009 SIYAC became a statutory network within the Iowa Department of Human Rights' section of the Iowa Code (216A.140.8) under the umbrella of the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD).

## **ELIGIBILITY and APPLICATION PROCESS**

SIYAC's members are young people between the ages of 14 and 20 from across Iowa. Youth who have leadership qualities and want to become involved in the legislative process are encouraged to apply. This includes supporting legislation and meeting with legislators. Youth selected to serve as members of SIYAC will reflect the diversity in Iowa and the positive differences throughout our state and among its young people.

The council meets quarterly at the State Capitol in Des Moines and holds bi-weekly conference calls. Applications received by **May 1, 2014** will receive priority consideration and new SIYAC members will be selected by June 30, 2014. Members serve two-year terms. There are no fees for youth to participate and travel expenses to and from meetings will be reimbursed. Visit [www.icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC](http://www.icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC) for more information about SIYAC.

If you are interested in representing Iowa's youth in our state government, please read the following "Expectations & Commitments" and complete the attached application on pages 7-9 of this document. Create a separate document and type your answers to the questions on pages 8 and 9. A letter of recommendation will also be required for SIYAC applicants, which should be submitted to the SIYAC Coordinator directly by the person completing the recommendation letter.

## **EXPECTATIONS & COMMITMENTS**

- SIYAC members will **begin their two-year term in July**.
- Members will serve a **two-year term**. Youth who are in good standing with the council may reapply for another term.
  - Youth who are in good standing with the council may seek to reapply for membership for consecutive terms.
  - Graduating seniors may choose to resign from their post or continue serving on SIYAC given that they are able to fulfill their SIYAC duties in addition to their post-secondary plans, and remain in Iowa (college, career, military, etc...).
  - The major SIYAC activity during the summer months is a new member orientation. Second year members will have the opportunity to assist in the orientation.
  - SIYAC members **may be dismissed** if they do not meet membership expectations or if there is concern among the council's members that a member has defaced the reputation of the council.
- Youth will be **responsible for their own transportation** to the SIYAC meetings. Mileage and meal reimbursement will be provided for members attending SIYAC events.
  - **There is no fee to participate in SIYAC.**
- Council members can expect numerous opportunities to demonstrate and develop **leadership, communication, teamwork and organizational skills**.
  - Officer and committee chair positions are available and are voted on by the council's members.
  - Members are responsible for both initiating and maintaining **communication via phone, email or other methods in addition to the formal SIYAC meetings**.
- Each SIYAC member will participate in **two service projects** each year.
- SIYAC members will **represent youth throughout the entire state of Iowa**; not merely each member's own personal opinions.
  - Youth will be responsible for **gathering input/opinions from other youth** in their community prior to each SIYAC meeting.
  - SIYAC will be expected to **collaborate with the Iowa Youth Congress** and to utilize this group as a resource that reflects the views of a wide range of Iowa's youth. To facilitate this, **SIYAC members will be encouraged to participate in Iowa Youth Congress events**.
- Youth will be expected to **attend all mandatory quarterly (four per year) SIYAC meetings at the State Capitol in Des Moines** and will also be encouraged to attend any additional relevant opportunities for civic engagement (local town hall meetings, city council meetings, etc...) or youth development (trainings, conferences, etc...) that may present themselves.
  - If excessive absences occur, membership will be evaluated by the council's Executive Committee based on the members' contribution to SIYAC.
  - Youth will **dress professionally** and appropriately at SIYAC meetings or events.
- Members will form committees within SIYAC to address pertinent youth issues. **Each committee will complete a long-term project** relevant to their issue.
  - For examples, visit our website <http://www.icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC/issues.html>
- **Partnerships with legislators, nonprofits, state and local leaders** that have common goals in addressing youth issues are highly encouraged.
  - SIYAC members will be expected to initiate and sustain these relationships. **Networking is a key component of effective representation**.



## **DESCRIPTION**

Iowa Youth Congress (IYC) is a diverse and dynamic group of student representatives and we are always looking for students with new perspectives. Any Iowa high school student can apply to be part of IYC. There is no cost to participate and the program will provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities accepted into IYC.

IYC brings students from across the state to discuss issues that affect youth. Students from each region will meet in the fall of 2014 to brainstorm and discuss ideas they would like to see become new laws, or changes to current laws. After talking about these ideas in regional meetings, students decide what they will present at the all-student gathering at the Capitol in Des Moines.

Iowa Youth Congress members will travel from all parts of Iowa to talk about their issues formally in the House of Representatives Chamber at the Capitol in Des Moines. They will spend a full day over the weekend discussing their ideas in the same style as Iowa representatives and will attend a celebratory Dream Forward dinner afterward.

## **ELIGIBILITY and APPLICATION PROCESS**

Iowa Youth Congress models itself after the Iowa House of Representatives and accepts up to 100 high school participants. The application process for Iowa Youth Congress has two steps. The first is to fill out the application and send it in. The second will only be necessary if there are more than 100 applicants. In that case, you will be asked to participate in an interview over the phone. The questions for this interview will be sent to you once you apply, but will only be necessary if more than 100 students apply. This interview will help IYC select the students who will participate in the current year and determine those who will be listed as alternates, who will then get priority for next year's IYC. Anyone is welcome to apply!

## **EXPECTATIONS & COMMITMENTS**

- Members are expected to participate for the full year and attend all events, unless excused.
- All officers are expected to run and attend all meetings, unless excused.
- While participating in the Annual Event, and other formal events, students will dress in business wear. Members will respect one another and act in a responsible manner at all times.

- While in Des Moines, all members will follow the rules given to them at the beginning of the weekend. If any rules are broken that member may be asked to leave.
- Members will be expected to research bills they propose before all meetings.
- Members are expected to write or contact their legislators after the Annual House Session, to gain support of the IYC bills.