

# Capitol Quarterly



YMCA Youth &  
Government Newsletter  
November 2008



## Inside this issue:

New members of the Board of Directors	2
Alumni Message	3
Program Update	4
Youth Engagement Ideas	4
Fall Trainings	5
<i>The Zero Hour</i>	5
CONA Applications Due!	6
2008-09 Calendar of Events	6
Y&G AmeriCorps Partnership	7
Why support Y&G?	7

## Upcoming events/due dates:

<b>November 19</b>	CONA application deadline
<b>December 5</b>	MT scholarship applications due
<b>December 8</b>	YL Participation forms/fees due
<b>December 13</b>	Campaign close Y&G Board meeting YL Program meeting

## Help Youth & Government GO FOR GOLD!



Each year as we kick off our annual fundraising campaign it is important to remember exactly why we continue to support YMCA Youth & Government. During the campaign kickoff in September long time Y&G supporter, Virginia Stout, reminded our campaign team of the important role we play in preparing the next generation to carry out the work of democracy.

*As we envision our role in the YMCA, we do well to remember the importance of our work. We have the future of our country in our hands. The youth we engage are the people who will carry forth the dream of our forefathers to build a country with freedom and justice for all.*

-Virginia Stout



We hope the Youth & Government program has been a positive influence in your life and ask that you share your Youth & Government story with others. Your story is proof of the impact Y&G programs make and the reason these programs are vitally important to the future of our democratic institutions.

## Board of Directors

**Lucy Helm\***, Chair  
Starbucks Corporation

**Enid Layes\***, Vice Chair

**Jennifer Joly**, Secretary

**Sam Bovard**, Treasurer  
Key Bank

**Joan Yoshitomi**

**Mike Egan\***  
Microsoft Corporation

**Don Brevik**  
YMCA of Tacoma-Pierce  
County

**Chris Koenig\***  
Koenig Chevrolet Subaru

**Jim Bricker\***  
PEMCO Financial Services

**Judge Robert Lewis**  
Clark County Superior Court

**Noah Davis\***  
In Pacta PLLC

**Dwayne Slate\***

**Jeanne Cushman\***  
CushmanGale, LLC

**Al Ralston**  
Washington Research Council

**Kevin Hamilton**  
Perkins Coie LLP

**Chris Fidler\***

**Bill Stauffacher**  
Stauffacher Communications

**Joe Jenkins\***

**Isabelle Albi**  
Mock Trial Representative

**Phillip Gardner**  
Youth Governor

**Janelle D. Nesbit**  
Executive Director  
YMCA Youth & Government

\* Program Alumni

# Introducing Two Of Our Newest Board Members

**Al Ralston** has an extensive history in issues development and advocacy at the state and local government level. Recently, Al accepted the position of President of the Washington Research Council where he leads the premier issues research organization in Washington State.

Prior to the Washington Research Council, Al represented The Boeing Company, for 21 years, as a Senior Political Strategist and more recently as the lead lobbyist before city, county and state governments in Washington, Oregon, Hawaii and Montana. Al has also represented The Boeing Company as the primary representative on key Washington State trade missions promoting Boeing products and positions on International Trade to Mexico, The Peoples Republic of China, Japan and Vietnam.

Active in civic and community affairs, Al has served on the boards of The Association of Washington Business, Washington Research Council, Washington Council on International Trade, Associated Oregon Industries, Pacific Northwest International Trade Alliance, Highline Community College Foundation and the Western Washington University Alumni Association.

Al is married and has two wonderful daughters. He collects antique British Motorcycles which he enjoys riding when time permits.



Al Ralston



Kevin Hamilton

**Kevin Hamilton** has two decades of experience in labor and employment counseling and litigation with particular expertise in complex, multiple plaintiff, and class action litigation. Kevin has worked closely with a wide variety of clients on employment-related issues, including Starbucks, Vulcan, Inc., Experience Music Project, Eddie Bauer and others.

Kevin also has a great deal of experience in election and political law. He has worked on campaign finance issues as well as issues concerning the administration of elections. In 2004 Kevin served as trial counsel during the landmark Gubernatorial election in Washington State. He has also represented U.S. Senators and Congressmen.

In 2008 Kevin was listed in *Best Lawyers in America* "Labor & Employment Law" and *Corporate Counsel*, "Labor & Employment Law". Kevin currently works as a partner in the firm Perkins Coie, LLP.

# Alumni Message

## WHY WE STAY



**JAMES:** As I remember it, I was “forced” to join Youth and Government—the Smiths were creating a delegation and needed all the people they could get. I agreed to sign up for one year only, just to help them get the ball rolling. I remember having totally bizarre ideas about Y&G—I envisioned a Governor’s Ball like something out of Jane Austen, and debate something like the Continental Congress in 1776. None of our advisors had any experience with the program, and all of us were brand-new: our only glimpse of Y&G was a 3 minute clip from a KIRO 7 news report that the Smiths had videotaped. Somehow over the year we developed a sense of identity as a group. I don’t know, though, when it really sank in that Youth and Government was going to consume essentially the rest of my life. What do you remember about that first year?

**ANNA:** I don’t remember being “forced” into it. I just remember thinking that it would be fun to hang out with friends and meet new people—I had no desire to learn about democracy and government. I don’t think the purpose of Y&G was a focus for me until the end of the year, when we were in Olympia for session. I know it was then that I became “hooked” on the program. I remember my bill passing the Freshman House and being signed by the Governor (at least I’m pretty sure it was); and I was so proud of myself. I spent the summer after session trying desperately to think of new and important things to write bills about, and eagerly looked forward to the next school year.

**JAMES:** If I have to guess what the moment of “commitment” was, I think it must have been sometime during session on the House floor. I remember arriving in the House to find that my seat was a plastic chair crammed between the nice leather ones, and rather than a desk in front of me, I was looking at a wastepaper basket. After the second time I appealed the decision of the chair (I know, I sound like I was “that guy”, but I really don’t think I was), I didn’t get called on much anymore. I had time to be simultaneously impressed at the ideas of my fellow House members, since I had nothing else to do but listen, and also to be frustrated that a lot of time and good ideas got lost due to mismanagement along the way. I wanted to move out of that plastic chair, and into a place where I could work to make the sessions run smoothly and get everyone involved. That basically sums up what I tried to do with the next two years in Y&G. And I think that volunteering as an advisor, now, is in some ways a continuation of that goal, though of course in some ways it is very different.

**ANNA:** I think I had the same feelings as you - watching the House session (from the galleries) made me want to come back the following year and be more involved. Transitioning into an advisor role straight out of high school was a way to keep on improving session, though in a “hands off” way. These past 10 years of advising have been so much more rewarding than I ever expected. Initially, I think I looked at it as a way to continue my participation, but now I see it as an opportunity to give delegates the chance to use their skills to make it the best possible program for them. At the end of closing session, I marvel at how far the delegates have come and how much they’ve grown. Every year, I look at the group of Seniors and remember what they were like as Freshmen. And it never fails to shock me when past delegates come back, either to visit session or to advise their own delegation, and I see that they are all grown up.

**JAMES:** I think what you’re saying is that the program really does help students find the confidence and voice they need...that when we see these graduates return, regardless of what else they’re doing with their lives, they’re the kind of informed, active, open-minded people that Y&G is supposed to shape. And that’s why we stay.

*- Anna Parlin and James Rosenzweig  
Participants 1996-1998, Advisors 1999-Present*



If you are alumni of the Youth Legislature or Mock Trial program and would be interested in sharing your story please contact the Youth & Government office. Send stories and photos to [youthandgovpdir@qwestoffice.net](mailto:youthandgovpdir@qwestoffice.net).

# Program Update

YMCA Youth & Government is reaching record numbers of students! We are expecting **16 new programs** to be formed this fall. New groups are coming from YMCA's, public schools and home school groups all over the state. Check out the list below to see if there will be a new Y&G program in your area.



Taylor Brady of the Monroe Delegation in the 8th Grade Senate

## New Youth Legislature Delegations:

Kellog Middle School  
Gig Harbor YMCA  
Marysville YMCA  
Mercer Island High School  
Northshore Home School Group  
Spokane YMCA  
Springfield School  
Sumner High School  
Union High School  
Waitsburg High School  
MacIlvey Middle School

## New Mock Trial Teams:

Black Hills High School  
Garfield High School  
Marysville-Pilchuck High School  
Mt. Spokane High School  
Stilligumish Valley School



Whatcom County students prepare for trial

# Top 10 Ways Youth Can Get Involved

It is a critical time in American politics and young people have amazing opportunities to get involved in the decisions going on around them. Just because you are not old enough to vote does not mean you do not have a voice. Here are some suggestions:

**10. volunteer for a political campaign**

**9. participate in a voter registration drive**

**8. attend a city/county council meeting**

**7. write a letter to your state/federal legislator**

**6. attend a rally or demonstration**

**5. meet with your state Senator or Representative**

**4. page for the state legislature**

**3. invite local officials to speak at a meeting or class**

**2. discuss current events with friends, teachers & family**

**1. JOIN YOUTH & GOVERNMENT!**



# Fall Trainings

The 2008 Youth Legislature Advisor Training and Mock Trial Coaches' Orientation were very successful! The trainings brought teachers, YMCA staff and volunteers from all over the state. This year a new training format was used. Experienced advisors and coaches were recruited to hold brief workshops on program specific topics. This allowed attendees to learn from one another in a small group setting. Workshop facilitators did a fantastic job of sharing information while facilitating a group discussion of each topic.

This was a great kickoff for both the Youth Legislature and Mock Trial programs. **Thank you to all of you who participated!**



Coaches and Advisors give countless hours each year working with students in Y&G programs.

# 2008-09 Mock Trial Case

Dust off those legal pads! It's time for the 2008-2009 season of YMCA Mock Trial. This year's case, written by Judge William Downing of the King County Superior Court, deals with contract law in a high school setting. After a high school student, Zak Neiman, brings a gun to school his Creative Writing teacher is fired. The teacher, Tisby Hark, is suing the school district for wrongful termination in breaking his contract and violation of public policy. Teams of high school students all over the state of Washington are working arduously writing up direct-examinations, cross-examinations, and speeches to prepare for district competitions in February of 2009.



—Issy Albi  
Mock Trial Representative

Please cut and send checks to: YMCA Youth & Government; PO Box 193; Olympia, WA 98507

**Yes**, I would like to support YMCA Youth & Government with a financial contribution of:

- \$1,000** (Governor's Cabinet/Amicus Circle)
- \$500** (Sustainer)
- \$250** (Friend)
- \$50** (Supporter)
- Other** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my contribution to support:

- Youth Legislature
- Mock Trial
- CONA
- Area of most need
- Youth & Government endowment

This donation is in honor or in memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

Billing information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

# Apply for the YMCA Youth Conference on National Affairs



Iris Maute-Gibson  
2008 CONA Delegate

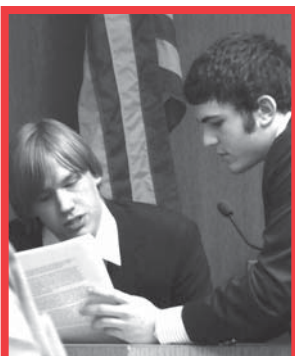
YMCA Youth & Government is looking for outstanding Youth Legislature and Mock Trial students interested in representing their state at a national conference. YMCA CONA is an opportunity for young people from around the country to come together for debate and fellowship. CONA delegates build lasting relationships while gaining a better understanding of the issues facing our nation and world.

Applicants must be currently enrolled in grades 10-12 and must be a participant in either the Youth Legislature or Mock Trial program.

Applications are due November 19<sup>th</sup> and may be found on the Youth & Government web site. Qualified applicants will participate in interviews with a committee of the Board on December 13<sup>th</sup> in Seattle.

## 2008-2009 Calendar Of Events

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>November 19</b>    | CONA applications due to state office   |
| <b>December 13</b>    | Board of Directors Meeting<br>YL Program Committee Meeting<br>CONA Interviews |
| <b>February 10</b>    | Governor's Breakfast & Proclamation Signing                                   |
| <b>March 14</b>       | Board of Directors Meeting<br>YL Program Committee Meeting                    |
| <b>March 27-29</b>    | YMCA Mock Trial State Competition   |
| <b>April 24-26</b>    | Youth Legislature Leadership Training   |
| <b>May 6-9</b>        | 62 <sup>nd</sup> YMCA Youth Legislature                                       |
| <b>June 5-8</b>       | Board of Directors strategic planning retreat                                 |
| <b>June 25-July 3</b> | Conference on National Affairs  |



Students from Lynden and  
Archbishop Murphy square  
off on the stand

# YMCA Youth & Government Partners with AmeriCorps



My name is Sarah LaGrange. I am the first AmeriCorps volunteer to work in the YMCA Youth & Government office. AmeriCorps State is a program that works with Governor appointed State Service Commissions, in my case this is Community Youth Services, to provide grants to public and nonprofit organizations. The purpose of AmeriCorps State is to engage members in direct service and capacity-building to address unmet community needs. In my specific position this means I am involved in direct service to under served youth in Thurston County. My goals this year are to help increase participation in the Youth Legislature program within Thurston County, support statewide program events and build a lasting, sustainable partnership between YMCA Youth & Government and AmeriCorps State.



Sarah LaGrange

I learned about and became interested in AmeriCorps in general, and this program in particular, as a way to gain experience working in a professional setting and learn about non profit organizations. In 2006 I graduated from George Washington University with a BA in International Affairs. Since then I have worked with at-risk teens in both wilderness and residential settings.

I look forward to working with many of you this year. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about my position or suggestions for how I can obtain my goals.

- Sarah LaGrange  
AmeriCorps Volunteer

## Half Way to the Finish Line!

YMCA Youth & Government kicked off its annual fundraising campaign in September. Volunteers around the state are working towards a gold medal finish and our theme this year is *Going for Gold*. The YMCA Youth & Government Board and volunteer campaigners are working to raise **\$125,000** to support the Youth Legislature and Mock Trial programs! One of the primary goals of YMCA Youth & Government is to ensure all students, regardless of their economic position, have access to quality civic education programs. For this reason volunteers raise money each year to subsidize the participation of each student in Youth & Government programs.

Last year your contributions reduced program fees by \$82 for Youth Legislature participants and \$32 for Mock Trial participants. Additionally 23 students received need based scholarships. Thank you! Your support makes Youth Legislature and Mock Trial programs available to *ALL* students.



Visit us on the web at:  
[www.youthandgovernment.org](http://www.youthandgovernment.org)

360.357.3475  
[youthandgovexec@qwestoffice.net](mailto:youthandgovexec@qwestoffice.net)

PO Box 193  
Olympia, WA 98507

**Contact  
YMCA Youth & Government at:**

YMCA of Greater Seattle



Washington State

**YOUTH & GOVERNMENT**<sup>TM</sup>

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

*Democracy must be learned by each generation!*