

YMCA CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL AFFAIRS



YMCA Conference on National Affairs

Interested in exploring national and international issues? Eager to meet Youth and Government delegates from around the country? Thinking about running for a youth officer position or starting a political party?

If you answered 'yes' to any of those questions, then the YMCA Conference on National Affairs (CONA) may be the opportunity for you. As many as 25 delegates from Connecticut will attend the week-long conference in North Carolina from July 3rd to July 9th. The conference provides a unique environment for high school students to interact with their peers from around the country intellectually, socially, and recreationally.

Participants prepare a written proposal to be discussed at the conference in a series of committees. The highest ranked proposals are presented and debated during the final Plenary Session by all 500+ participants.

Many CONA participants describe the conference as one of their best high school experiences and a source of life-long friendships, leadership skills, and career opportunities.

For a more personal perspective on the conference speak with any of the Youth Officers who all attended CONA in 2009.

Application procedures, fee schedule, program calendar, and frequently asked questions can be found on the next page.

MORE INFORMATION: State Director Gary Wright, 203-980-0260, gwright@ctyag.org

Conference Highlights

- July 3rd - July 9th, 2010
- 500+ participants from 30+ states
- debate and discuss national and international issues
- located in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville, North Carolina
- dances, hikes, games, swimming, ultimate frisbee, bonfire, and more

Application Details

- submit application (see next page)
- priority given to: newly elected Youth Officers, Best Debaters, Outstanding Press and Youth in Law participants
- mandatory training sessions in April, May, and June

Costs

- \$700 (program fee, room, board, transportation, luggage fees, tee-shirt) with financial aid available.
- \$50-\$75 spending money: souvenirs, snacks, meals on travel days



Application Process

There are 25 possible positions with preference given to the elected officials and award winners:

Elected Officers	5
Outstanding Debaters	4
Outstanding Press Corps	1
Outstanding Lobbyist	1
Outstanding Oral Advocate	2
Open Positions	12

All participants, including award winners and elected officers, must complete an application. Application instructions are included at the bottom of this page.

Wait List: Some applicants may be put on a waiting list. Wait-listed applicants must attend all meetings and complete all paperwork in order to remain eligible to attend the conference. No payment is required until applicant is moved off the wait list.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate all applications:

- content of application
- performance during CT YAG events
- advisor recommendation
- evidence of leadership potential
- number of applicants per delegation
- participation in the community (school, YMCA, church, etc.)
- CONA alumni status

Calendar and Program Fees

The program fee of \$700 includes, room, board, transportation, luggage fees, delegation tee-shirt, and the national conference fee. The payment schedule and program schedule are as follows:

Date	Deadline or Event	Payment
Mar 26	Application Deadline	
Mar 28	Application Results Emailed	
Apr 11	1st Training Session	\$350 due
May 2	2nd Training Session	\$350 due
Jun 13	3rd Training Session	
Jul 3	Depart for Conference	
Jul 9	Return from Conference	

late fees and higher airfare apply after 5/2

All meetings are at the Southington YMCA from 10:30 to 12:30. Participants must attend two of the three training sessions and submit all paperwork and fees on time regardless of meeting attendance. Please check your schedule before applying.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available—all applicants who are committed to attending will be accommodated. All participants are requested to contribute a minimum of \$100 making the maximum assistance \$600. Complete the relevant sections of the application to begin the process. Applicants are evaluated without regard to financial need.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How is the conference organized?
 A: Participants prepare a written proposal to be discussed at the conference in a series of committees. The highest ranked proposals are presented and debated during the final Plenary Session by all 500+ participants.

Q: What topics are appropriate for CONA?
 A: Issues of national and international importance are appropriate. Because of this, most state YAG bill topics are not appropriate for CONA.

Q: What is the conference facility like?
 A: The YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly (www.blueridgeassembly.org) is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains outside of Asheville, NC. It is a full-service conference center with extensive meeting space and dormitory style housing.

Q: Is the entire week about debate?
 A: No, there are many opportunities to spend time socializing with the other delegates including two dances, hikes, a bellyflop contest, ultimate frisbee, and more.

Q: What are the travel arrangements?
 A: We'll travel by bus from New Haven to LaGuardia airport, fly to Charlotte, and take another bus to the conference facility. We leave from New Haven early in the morning on July 3rd and return to New Haven late in the afternoon on July 9th.



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Make sure you are able to attend at least two of the three training sessions as well as the conference itself. Identify and briefly research a topic of national or international importance before attempting to complete the application. Your application will be evaluated in part based on this research. The application can be found at: ctyag.wufoo.com/forms/cona-application. For further information contact State Director Gary Wright by email (gwright@ctyag.org) or phone (203-980-0260).