

# 2012-2013 Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council Annual Report



*July, 2013*



## *Mission*

*Our mission is to foster a greater appreciation and understanding of civic participation among Louisiana's young people. As citizens and the future leaders of our state, we believe that in order to improve our state, it is fundamental that we be active and engaged to enact positive change and influence our governmental system for the better. By facilitating discussion, provoking thought, and encouraging action on the part of our peers, the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council can strive to have an integral part in forming our future.*



*To examine and facilitate communication between youth and the legislature regarding issues of importance to youth, including but not limited to education, employment, strategies to increase youth participation in local and state government, safe environments for youth, substance abuse, underage drinking, emotional and physical health, poverty, litter and environmental control, driver's licenses, and youth access to state and local services.*

## *Purpose*



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## President's Message

I remember taking my seat at the inaugural meeting of this Council during the summer of 2012. I remember listening to and interacting with all the other students present. What great perspectives they all had. All of them were assured of their stances and defended their claims well. Never before had I experienced such a group of students. That I was elected to lead such established and promising people is truly, truly humbling.

What I find to be most indicative of this Council is the care its members have for Louisiana. We all know that the state isn't perfect, that much is obvious. But we all want to contribute to some form of progress; I believe that we have. Although we were unable to present a bill to the legislature, we have all accomplished great feats which have contributed to our communities. From paving the road for new municipal youth councils to "igniting" our peers to engage in community service, the members of this year's Council never had personal glory in mind. The objective was always to provide a means for those who follow us to prosper.

This past year, many of us represented the State's youth in the face of public officials and other leading figures on issues which affect us and future Louisiana's youth. The Council's participation this year on Louisiana Public Square showcased our *individual* capabilities as well as our abilities to serve as a *group*. This year, we all made deep connections with one another; it didn't matter if one person was a full member or an alternate. We were all working towards the same goal of progress.

Captain Spock of Starfleet will one day say, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or the one." The members of this year's Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council have preceded the Vulcan, as evidenced by all of our efforts throughout this term. We all have served our locales and state valiantly. I cannot express in words how proud I am of each of us and of the Council as a whole. We have achieved much and will continue to do so in coming years and even decades. Our state, our nation, and our world are in need of leaders. This Council's roster is composed of those leaders. I am honored that one day, I can say that I know those leaders. Good luck and Godspeed.

Uday Toodi  
LYAC President, 2012-2013

# Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council

## **Youth Council Purpose:**

As provided in R.S. 24:973.1, LYAC was established to examine and facilitate communication between youth and their legislators on issues of importance to teens, including but not limited to education, employment, strategies to increase youth participation in local and state government, underage drinking, substance abuse, physical fitness and health, as well as other issues. In 2012-2013, community service and education issues, such as "bullying at schools" have been a focus.

## **Membership:**

- 21 youth members appointed by the Commission on Civic Education pursuant to an application process
- Must be aged 14 to 19, in grades 9 through 12 at a Louisiana high school or a home study program, or enrolled in a GED skills program
- Composition:
  - ▶ Two youth members appointed to represent youth from each of the congressional districts
  - ▶ The remaining members from the state at-large

# LYAC Officers

## 2012-2013



**Uday Toodi**  
**President**



**Mallory Bacon**  
**Vice-President**



**Robin Spiess**  
**Secretary**



**Monique Claiborne**  
**Communications Officer**



**Karryn Paulsen**  
**Historian**

# Commentary - Head Senior Advisor

## Robert Lancon

Recipient of the Louisiana Civics in Action Award  
(awarded by the La. Center for Law & Civic Education)



Former Louisiana Governor, Mike Foster, once said, “Anytime you can connect the classroom to the outside world, kids will learn more.” The La. Legislative Youth Advisory Council sets out to do just that — we allow youth to be a part of the process, rather than just studying it. In the two years I have been associated with the council, I have seen and been a part of things most adults are not even aware of, and have seen how these opportunities can truly change a person for the better. During the 2011-2012 council session, I served as a representative of the Third Congressional District — a district I was proud to hail from and one that faces unique challenges. The representatives from each district and various organizations convened together to better ourselves and the state. While it took us a few meetings to hone in on our focus, when we did set our goals, phenomenal things would happen. The 2011-2012 Council choose to focus on a challenge from State Representatives we met with; we choose to promote community service among high school students throughout Louisiana. We never could have imagined where the path would take us, but as Chairman I had the opportunity to lead my committee to achieving a vision with a wide impact. The soon-to-be implemented Community Service High School Diploma Endorsement program promotes service, recognizes outstanding students, and helps to bring even the lowest performing students to a brighter future. Our initiative not only impacted the state, but also had a huge impact on us as we learned the civic process, met with statewide officials, testified before committees, and spoke to the media. Being allowed to be a part of the solution made us and our fellow Louisianans aware that youth are not merely the problem, but can in fact be part of the answer.

This year, I have had the unique opportunity to view the council from a different perspective. As the 2012-2013 Head Senior Advisor, I have had a “Bird's Eye View” into the civic engagement process provided by the council. The unique role I have played has only solidified my belief that no organization or program is doing as much to prepare our youth to improve this state. Watching this year's council shape their vision, work together, and represent youth has not only ensured me that Louisiana has a bright future ahead of us; but has also helped me to realize how bright our present is. The outstanding youth I have served with, and now advise, reinforce the pride I have in this state and in our vision. LYAC has been nationally recognized for the impact it is making and I am sure that in just a few election cycles it will become even further evident across the state that our organization is shaping leaders for tomorrow. The youth I served with and the youth I advise will one day lead this great state, and I attribute the skill sets, interest, and abilities they have to lead to lessons they learned in LYAC. I learned about the legislative process, I became well acquainted with my legislators, I identified the issues I am passionate about, and I learned how to lead. Now I have only one thing to learn — how to further support LYAC, support youth, and support Louisiana. It is because of programs like LYAC that I am proud to live in Louisiana, will continue to make this state my home, and look forward to working with others in my generation to lead this great state.

# Member Spotlight

Clay Parker

2012-2013 LYAC Member

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Catholic High School



Wow! What an incredible year! Serving the teens of Louisiana on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council has been an unbelievable experience. I have discovered through my involvement in LYAC that it takes people with opinions and convictions that differ with mine to make a democratic society work. Being involved in the civic process as a youth has taught me that not everyone has the same opinions, needs or background as me. Only in a civic organization are all these varied people put together that learn to work in harmony in order to achieve a stronger community. What better way is there to improve our society than to start with teaching youth how to work together through civic involvement? That is a win-win situation.

This year has proven to me that our leaders are interested in the thoughts and opinions of youth. Because we are not old enough to vote, not tax payers supporting the state coffers and not business owners who make the economy roll in Louisiana, I never really thought anyone would take teenagers seriously in the matters of policy and laws for our state. This year I have met with elected officials, community members and state employees regarding issues directly affecting youth and our schools. Through these opportunities, I have discovered that no one really knows the true issues facing today's youth nor how we really feel if they are not told by youth themselves. Many have committed to working with the council to solve some of the educational and societal issues we are identifying as problems for teens and even young children.

My biggest passion in life has been to find a way to stop or reduce bullying. Before serving on LYAC, I never thought it was possible to make a difference. After all, I'm only one kid. I realized I can make a difference after participating in the LPB forum, Louisiana Public Square, on bullying. While Louisiana has made progress in deterring bullying, there is still work left to be done. If the youth of our society do not get passionate about this problem and demand change, the problem will never get better. I never want to hear in my lifetime that another person has been hurt by a bully or has taken their own life as a result of being bullied. I firmly believe this is my civic duty to pursue. We have legislators and other leaders listening and ready to help us. Now it is up to us to show Louisiana and the nation just what civic involvement by youth can accomplish. As a senior advisor on the council for the upcoming 2013-2014 school year, I have committed to working with the new council and legislators to further address the issue of bullying and help victims of this senseless abuse.

My experience with LYAC has only confirmed my desire to work both as a youth and an adult in the civic and governmental process to make Louisiana and our nation the best. Serving on this council has taught me that youth today need to get passionate about problems and

situations that affect their daily lives. However, having opinions and being passionate is not enough. We, as youth, need to act on this passion and commit to work with leaders now and in the future to make our communities a safer, better place to live. This council is the perfect opportunity to train young people in the correct process for affecting change locally, statewide and nationally. Being a contributing member of society is so much more than working and raising a family. I now realize that we must have competent, trained, passionate people to keep our societies and government strong and our world peaceful.

I am very thankful to the Commission on Civic Education for supporting our council and providing this opportunity for us to be a part of the process. I also hope I can count on the Commission's members and my fellow LYAC members for their vote when they see my name on the ballot at the polls in future years.

## **2012-2013 LYAC MEMBERS**

**Rebecca Aaron**

**Bolton High School**

*Personal Statement: Through my participation in LYAC this past year, I have learned to be comfortable when communicating with adult leaders and expressing a youth perspective on the numerous issues affecting young people. Specifically, I was able to communicate and coordinate with my state legislators, Representative Herbert Dixon and Senator Rick Gallot, to visit my high school for Legislator's Back to School Day. This activity provided my classmates with a chance to speak to our legislators and share their ideas and perspectives on issues. In addition, my activity in LYAC encouraged me to fight against voter apathy in youth. With the information I received from LYAC, I promoted the Louisiana voter registration initiative known as "Geaux Vote!" on my high school campus. Once a month, I coordinated a booth providing information on the various ways to register to vote in Louisiana. The interaction with LYAC inspired me to continue working throughout my life on encouraging others to vote and be active at the community level of legislation.*

**Mallory Bacon**

**Bolton High School**

*Personal Statement: I am honored to have been a part of the thoughtful, intelligent group of young adults comprising the Legislative Youth Advisory Council of this past year. Being surrounded by youth who were just as passionate about civic engagement as I am created an environment that promoted self growth and truly inspired me. The Council taught me that I do have a voice in government, no matter how small it may seem, and I need to utilize this voice whenever I can. The Council has left a profound impact on my life, and I know the knowledge and friendships I've gained through my membership will stay with me.*

**Taylor Boutte**

**New Iberia Senior High School**

*Personal Statement: I strongly believe in encouraging youth to voice their opinions. This year the LYAC has exhibited the importance of a meaningful youth voice. Members were able to speak from the heart, offering a youthful opinion concerning topics such as: education, bullying, and youth fitness. Youth voices are necessary in order to make positive transformations in the lives of other youth.*

**Eleanor Gilbert**

**Glenbrook School**

*Personal Statement: Civic engagement is vital for youth, for our own sake. Decisions made by government authorities today impact us now, and will continue to impact future choices available to us. We are immediately affected by laws governing elementary, secondary, and higher education. Results of current legislation will shape, locally and nationally, our quality of life for years to come. Our legislators, in effect, are now creating factors for us to consider as we try to determine our careers, both by profession and by location. We wish to live, to work, and to raise our families in a favorable environment. Civic engagement of youth is critical as we try to make our communities, our state, and*

*our nation the best they can be.*

**Jack Mierl**

**Mandeville High School**

Personal Statement: *People don't realize that their voice and actions echo past the present and affect our futures. What we say today will impact tomorrow because we are the future leaders of our communities, state, and nation. We must practice civic engagement to improve our state.*

**Nooreen Moosa**

**Episcopal High School**

Personal Statement: *Throughout my involvement in many youth oriented groups in Baton Rouge and Louisiana, I've realized that the youth can have a meaningful voice and that there are many people who are willing to listen. I think that not being able to vote shouldn't discourage anyone from expressing their opinions, because the youth of today are the voters of tomorrow.*

**Rache'l Oatis**

**Lutcher High School**

Personal Statement: *The voices of young people are infinite like the universe. We must take advantage of every opportunity to express the concerns and views of our young, powerful minds. Legislators listen, government officials listen, and now, more than ever, it is time for us to speak.*

**Ariane Schaffer**

**Lusher Charter School**

Personal Statement: *As a strong public education reform advocate in Louisiana, LYAC has provided me with in-depth, tangible knowledge about the Louisiana Legislature that I will forever be grateful for. All policies regarding public education are set by the Louisiana Legislature. These policies are written, discussed, and passed by people who are NOT immediately affected by these outcomes. Taken from the 2010 U.S. Department of Commerce United States Census Bureau, 24.4% of Louisiana is age 18 and under—that's almost one-fourth of Louisiana's population that does not have a vote in what happens to their education. With minimal activists for education reform, 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the population is left feeling as if they have no voice. Students need to be involved in the identifying and addressing issues of public concern so they can provide feedback and give insight to policy makers into the reality of daily life in the Louisiana public school system. At Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) meetings, speaking with public officials and debating policies with one another taught me how to question the norms come up with effective alternatives to the problem. LYAC taught me the steps to be an effective advocate of change. I will be attending American University in the Fall of 2013 to study public policy and education in hopes to use the knowledge I gain to better the state of Louisiana.*

**Uday Toodi**

**McKinley Senior High School**

Personal Statement: *The time to become involved is not tomorrow. Putting off commitments to the community is akin to procrastinating on progress. Dedication and hard work result in change; what is not necessarily understood is that anyone can be the spark that is needed.*

<b>Clay Parker (Personal Statement: See "Member Spotlight")</b>	
<b>Kesany Boupapanh</b>	<b>Louisiana School for Math, Science &amp; Arts</b>
<b>Laura Bowers</b>	<b>Barbe High School</b>
<b>Leah Cavalier</b>	<b>New Iberia Senior High School</b>
<b>Monique Claiborne</b>	<b>Westminster Christian Academy</b>
<b>Kalin Larousse</b>	<b>Thibodaux High School</b>
<b>Jasmine Littles</b>	<b>Zachary High School</b>
<b>Nicholaus Living</b>	<b>Helen Cox High School</b>
<b>Brandy Milliman</b>	<b>Catholic High School (New Iberia)</b>
<b>Austin Nelson</b>	<b>Pineville High School</b>
<b>Karryn Paulsen</b>	<b>Loyola College Preparatory</b>
<b>Robin Spiess</b>	<b>Lakeshore High School</b>

**Let the Youth Voice be heard!**



## **LYAC ALTERNATE MEMBERS**

### **Joshua Bertalotto**

### **Avoyelles Public Charter School**

Personal Statement: *LYAC has truly changed my life. It has been the greatest opportunity to learn about state and local government first-hand and to see some of our ideas actually implemented. When youth are engaged and we use our voices in a meaningful way, our possibilities are endless.*

### **Patrick Flanigan**

### **Mandeville High School**

Personal Statement: *LYAC gives the youth of Louisiana an excellent opportunity to voice their opinions on state policy and to be involved by offering perspectives on policy to our legislators, regardless of whether or not they are a member of the council.*

### **Stephanie Lutfallah**

### **Alexandria Senior High School**

Personal Statement: *If Americans are involved civically from a young age, then their future is in safe hands. Finding the opportunity to speak out is all it takes to engage an ambitious student. That is the purpose of LYAC — to open up the doors wide for motivated prospective leaders.*

### **Wallace Myers**

### **Bethel Christian School**

Personal Statement: *I am honored to serve on LYAC because civic involvement has been the foundation of my character. It has taught me how to communicate with people and better serve my community and state.*

### **Jade Spears**

### **Baton Rouge Magnet High School**

Personal Statement: *My involvement on LYAC has shown me that the youth voice needs to be heard by legislators because our opinion is unique to our experiences.*

### **Allison Waddell**

### **Captain Shreve High School**

Personal Statement: *A leader serves through his hands, but acts through the love and dedication of his heart.*

Taylor Barr

Sara Brasseaux

Kamesha Brumfield

Carie Dupree

Gregory Estes

Michael Favorite

Harry Fink

Leslye Guidry

Nina Hoffpauir

Lindsey Landry

Bolton High School

Westgate High School

Scotlandville Magnet High School

Haughton High School

Sarah T. Reed High School

Donaldsonville High School

Slidell High School

St. Louis Catholic High School

Lafayette High School

Barbe High School

Bethany Rhodes  
J Cindy Simporios  
Victoria Stryker  
Zoe Swarzenski  
Drew Walker

Farmerville High School  
Helen Cox High School  
Westgate High School  
Baton Rouge Magnet High School  
Fontainebleau High School

# **2012-2013 Meetings**

# Orientation and Leadership Seminar

The first public hearing and Leadership Seminar was held July 23-24, 2012, at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge. A brief itinerary of the Leadership Day and agenda of the Orientation and Public Hearing are included below:

## July 23, 2012 Orientation

### WELCOME

Addressing Youth Leadership and the Role of Responsible Citizenship  
 Senator Sharon Broome and Representative Regina Barrow



### ORIENTATION

Overview of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council  
 Initiatives of the Council



### GENERAL DISCUSSION

Engaging Teens in Your Hometown  
 Tom Ed McHugh (Louisiana Municipal Association) and John  
 Gallagher (Louisiana City Attorneys Association)  
 Segment 1: Defining the Role of Local Government  
 Segment 2: Promoting Municipal Youth Councils

## Photo Gallery

### Volunteer LA

Janet Pace  
 Jason Miller



### Discussing Local Government

Tom Ed McHugh, LA Municipal Assoc.  
 John Gallagher, LA City Attorneys Assoc.



### LA World Peace Day

Brandy Milliman, LYAC member  
 Jerry Guillot, LWPD Committee Chair  
 Eleanor Gilbert, LYAC Member



### Living Healthy LA

Megan Johnson, LYAC Sr. Adv  
 Rudy Macklin, Exec. Director  
 Gov. Council on Fitness/Sports  
 Jarvis Claiborne



## July 24, 2012 Leadership Seminar

The Leadership Seminar is a day-long event that allows the student LYAC members to meet with statewide elected officials, policymakers, and other community leaders. Its purpose is to provide a series of mini-forums in which these youth members have the opportunity to: 1) engage in meaningful discussions with public officials while sharing youth perspectives and concerns on current events, 2) listen to community leaders, including youth leaders, on how to effectively communicate with officials, and 3) learn how to best represent the youth voice and be an effective leader for youth issues.

### Speakers & Participants:

Governor Bobby Jindal

Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne

Secretary of State Tom Schedler

State Representative Patrick Jefferson

Craig Freeman, School Board Member

Jerry Guillot, City Attorney, Town of Rosedale

CONCLUSION: Davante Lewis, Student Body President of McNeese State University and former LYAC vice-president; and David Holmes, student at Vanderbilt University and former LYAC president

### Below

(1) Members meet with Governor Bobby Jindal on the Leadership Day

(2) Lunch at the Governor's Mansion



## Leadership Seminar Photo Gallery



Left: Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne

Right: Secretary of State Tom Schedler



Left: East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Member, Craig Freeman

Right: State Representative Patrick Jefferson



Left: City Attorney Jerry Guillot

Right: former LYAC President David Holmes, and former LYAC Vice-President Davante Lewis, now McNeese State University SGA President



**Leadership Seminar Photo Gallery (cont.)**



**Additional 2012-2013 meetings, including agenda topics and speakers:**

**October, 2012**

Education Issues

Speaker: John White  
State Superintendent of Education



**January, 2013**

Bullying in Schools

Speakers: State Senator Sharon Weston Broome  
Robert Schaff, Department of Education  
Jeff Oglesby, Attorney, juvenile issues

**March, 2013**

Youth Issues: Bullying (continued); Inclusion of Foreign Language Instruction in Elementary Grades; Promotion of Mayors' Youth Councils  
Legislative Guest: State Representative Edward C. "Ted" James, II



**May, 2013**

- (1) Education and Other Legislative Issues  
Speakers: State Representative Barry Ivey  
Erin Bendily, Deputy Superintendent,  
Department of Education
- (2) Discussion of the Distinction for Community Service High School Diploma Endorsement and its promotion  
Speakers: Nicholas Auck, Volunteer Louisiana  
Robert Lancon, LYAC Head Senior Advisor
- (3) Approval of the committee recommendations of recipients for the LYAC Leadership Awards



## Photo Gallery of Meetings





**Committees met to discuss and recommend plans of action to the full council:**

**LYAC Legislative Affairs Committee:**



Committee Members: Clay Parker, chair; Uday Toodi, Rache'l Oatis, Kalin Larousse, Robin Spiess, Kesany Boupapanh, Joshua Bertalotto, Rebecca Aaron, Jack Mierl, Monique Claiborne, Stephanie Lutfallah

Members discussed ideas to share with legislators for possible legislation:

- 1) Add penalties and disciplinary action to students found guilty of bullying at school.
- 2) Request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the feasibility of integrating foreign language instruction in the curriculum for elementary grades.

**LYAC Student Recognition Committee:**

Members reviewed nominations for the LYAC Leadership Awards. Following the evaluation and review, recommendations were made to the full Council for approval and recognition. Details on award winners are contained in this report.





# **LYAC ACTIVITIES & INITIATIVES**

## **Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) Programming of Louisiana Public Square**

### **The program:**

Louisiana Public Square is LPB's monthly public affairs program that provides citizens a forum to voice their opinions and concerns about issues affecting Louisiana to leading experts and key decision makers. LPB has received state and national recognition for the series which serves as a model for other television stations around the country. One of the primary goals of Louisiana Public Square is to allow different points of view to be expressed and heard. Oftentimes there are attitudinal changes of discussion participants after being exposed to other opinions on the program.

One of the key features of this format is the depth and insightfulness of the discussion and questions generated in the citizen deliberations on a small group level. These queries are informed by not only the background material, but by the give-and-take dynamic of an open forum, skillfully moderated so that all participants are encouraged to speak their mind. The goal is to encourage civic engagement and civil discourse – the foundations of a strong democracy.

### **LYAC participation:**

The Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) is fortunate to have the opportunity for two youth members to be part of each citizen forum. The members of LYAC view this program as an important opportunity to share their opinions with other adult citizens and invited experts while giving a youth perspective on current events and issues of the state. Those programs in which LYAC members were invited to participate during the 2012-2013 year include:

- July, 2012                      H2Woe: Louisiana's Water Worries  
How do corporate and governmental policies affect the most precious resource of all — water?
- August, 2012                    Bullying in Louisiana  
How can students, parents, and teachers stand up to this aggressive behavior?
- September, 2012                Tax Break or Tax Broken: Louisiana's Tax Exemptions  
What is the return on investment of Louisiana tax credits?
- October, 2012                   Louisiana's Youth Vote 2012  
How energized are young voters about this year's presidential race?
- November, 2012                Confronting Louisiana's Dropout Dilemma
- December, 2012                Bullying in Louisiana (an Encore Presentation)

- January, 2013      Newtown, A Louisiana Perspective  
Where does Louisiana stand in this national discussion on guns and mental health?
- February, 2013      Preventable: HIV/AIDS in Louisiana  
How is Louisiana confronting this health issue?
- March, 2013      Tax Reform 2013  
What would these changes mean for low and middle income families?
- April, 2013      Louisiana's Coastal Concerns — BP and Beyond
- May, 2013      Medicaid Expansion — Take It or Leave It?
- June, 2013      STEM Status: Science, Technology, Engineering & Math in Louisiana

A complete listing of the Louisiana Public Square programs may be viewed online at [www.lpb.org/publicsquare](http://www.lpb.org/publicsquare).

Pictured below are LYAC participants at the STEM Public Square June program. New 2013-2014 LYAC members proudly represented the LYAC Group.



## Louisiana World Peace Day Initiative



**Background:** Each year, by Proclamation of the Governor and Resolution of the Legislature, Louisiana World Peace Day is recognized on October first. In 2012, the Louisiana World Peace Day Committee hosted the official ribbon cutting ceremony on September 30 at the State Capitol, which included the exhibit, *Children are the Future*, speakers, singers, dancers, and musical performances. Accompanying the main exhibit was a collection of artwork, photographs, essays, poetry, videos, and other literary works submitted by students across the state.

**LYAC Participation:** The Legislative Youth Advisory Council has the privilege of partnering with the Louisiana World Peace Day Committee to play a significant role in the opening ceremony of the event. Recognizing the value of LYAC's mission to promote the youth voice, and in this instance to promote world peace, the LYAC Group coordinated three segments of the event:

- 1) Submission of student projects, including artwork and literary works, to accompany the main exhibit in the Rotunda at the State Capitol, which are displayed during the month of October each year.
- 2) Coordination of student entertainment, which, this year, included a concert of the choirs representing the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, as well as NOCCA dancers performing ballet, jazz, and modern pieces, and the Lusher Charter School dancers.
- 3) Coordination of student speakers for the event, including the Youth Guest Speaker (LYAC member, Jack Mierl) and a speaker to give the youth perspective on this year's theme (LYAC president, Uday Toodi).

Each year, the event proves to be an excellent opportunity for all young people to be civically engaged by expressing their artistic and/or literary creativity and views on world peace through this educational experience.

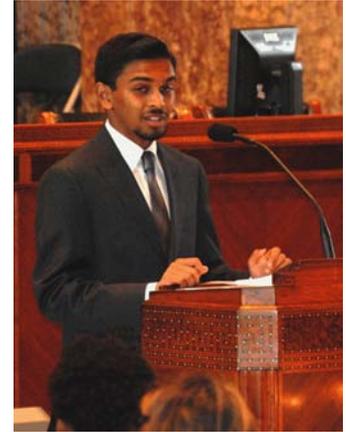
*Examples of student artwork displayed at the State Capitol*



## World Peace Opening Ceremony



**Left:** Jack Mierl, LYAC member and student at Mandeville High School, addressed the audience as the Youth Guest Speaker



**Right:** Uday Toodi, LYAC President and student at McKinley High School, presented the youth perspective on "Children are the Future"



## **LYAC Leadership Award**

The youth council awards young leaders around the state each year who:

- Serve as a positive example to other youth
- Achieve a significant accomplishment at his/her school or in the community
- Demonstrate outstanding youth leadership
- Promote responsible citizenship

Nominations are received each year for consideration. The Leadership Award is a certificate of recognition awarded by members of LYAC to other young leaders (one in each congressional district and one statewide winner) who exhibit exceptional leadership. Since this honor is selected and awarded by LYAC, no members of the LYAC Group are eligible to be nominated.

### **2013 Recipients:**

State Award:

Corey Chance Castillo, Vinton High School

Regional Recipients:

Austin Williams, Grant High School

Alexander Roscigno, Pope John Paul II Catholic High School

Victoria Lassiegne, Thomas Jefferson High School For Advanced Studies

Austin Wendt, St. Michael the Archangel High School

Trent Dugas, Loreauville High School

### **Photo Gallery**



## Legislators Back to School Program

### **The program:**

Kicking off the third week of September and continuing throughout the school year, the America's Legislators Back to School Program gives legislators in all 50 states the opportunity to meet personally with their young constituents and to answer questions, share ideas, listen to concerns and impart a greater understanding of the legislative processes necessary for developing effective public policy and engaged citizens.



Sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the program is designed to teach young people — the nation's future voters and leaders — what it's like to be a state legislator: the processes, the pressures, and the debate, negotiation and compromise that are the very fabric of representative democracy. The program helps to bring "civics to life" for young people. By entering the classroom and listening to students' perspectives, legislators are able to initiate a dialogue while letting American youth know that their ideas count.

### **LYAC participation:**

Partnering with the legislators from their hometowns, LYAC members invite both the state senator and state representative to the school to speak to a class and give a lesson in representative democracy. Each year, this program proves to be a positive experience for the students, the school, the legislators, and the LYAC members.

### Photo Gallery



## **Promoting Community Service Diploma Endorsements**

**Senate Resolution 11; House Resolution 9; Act 295** of the 2012 Regular Session

### **Legislative Process: the Resolutions and Act 295**

LYAC members worked in concert with Representative Steve Carter (Chairman of the House Committee on Education) and Senator Conrad Appel (Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education) by proposing the idea of rewarding high school students with a diploma endorsement for their volunteer and service efforts in their communities. The members offered their solutions and perspectives resulting in the introduction of a House and Senate Resolution which both requested the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in collaboration with the Louisiana Serve Commission, to study the feasibility of establishing a "distinction for community service" endorsement program for students who have performed an exemplary number of community service hours during their high school career, and to provide a report to the legislative committees by February 1, 2013.

The resolutions provided for the study to include the following elements:

- (1) A service diploma endorsement program for community service hours performed by high school students, accrued from the ninth grade through the twelfth grade, in the form of a diploma endorsement, a notation on the student's high school transcript, and acknowledgment at high school graduation programs.
- (2) The cost of a seal to be affixed to the diploma.
- (3) The method and manner in which community service may be acquired through school-sponsored and independent, but verifiable, community service activities.
- (4) The method and manner in which the hours of community service completed by students may be tracked.

The resolutions also provided that should a "distinction for community service" endorsement program be developed and implemented, participation be voluntary and such decision to participate be made at the discretion of the governing authority for each high school under the jurisdiction of such authority.

Following the introduction of the resolutions, a group of LYAC members met with Representative Regina Barrow, who expressed their opinions on why an incentive of a diploma endorsement for hours of service may be an attractive option for students. After the discussions with the students, Representative Barrow agree authored a House Bill to align with the purposes of the two resolutions. The resolutions passed both houses of the legislature without opposition and the bill became Act 295 of the 2012 Legislative Session.

The important part of this concept is that it was developed by the high school members of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council to benefit teens statewide. The youth council members followed the legislation from start to finish and was able to be part of a "real

life" experience in the legislative process. LYAC member Robert Lancon (Head Senior Advisor) and Nathan Babb (Senior Advisor) both testified in the House and Senate committees on the resolutions and House Bill. Testimony by these young people on such an initiative was an important part of representing the voices of youth in Louisiana and bringing from concept to reality the opportunity for students to earn a "Distinction for Community Service" high school diploma endorsement.

The feasibility study was conducted by the Department of Education and forwarded to the legislative committees by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The state board issued a notice of intent of a new Rule to implement the diploma endorsement. The Rule was adopted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and published in the April 20, 2013 issue of the Louisiana Register (Bulletin 741 Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators - High Schools, LAC 28:CSV.2317). See below for specifics on the final report and the hours which will be required for the diploma endorsement:

**Final Report by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education: completion of the study requested by the legislation and implementation of the new Rule**

The following are excerpts from the study, submitted by BESE to the Legislative Committees (*source: Report to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education of the Legislature, Pursuant to House Resolution No. 9 and Senate Resolution No. 11 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, 2013*):

**"Executive Summary**

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education recognizes the benefit of community service in developing a sense of civic responsibility and strong life skills such as communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, self-esteem, and cultural awareness. Therefore, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in coordination with Volunteer Louisiana, has approved, as a notice of intent, a policy allowing school districts to offer a Community Service Diploma Endorsement. The policy includes the number of hours the student must earn each year and allows participating districts to determine acceptable community service. Should it become rule, the policy will take effect with the entering ninth grade class of 2013-2014. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education would like to express its appreciation to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council for seeing a need, and developing and promoting an excellent solution."

\* \* \*

**"Executive Summary of Recommendations**

The development of a community service program does not need to be complex nor should such a program be mandatory. The spirit of community service as illustrated in Senate Resolution 11 and House Resolution 9 is based on the desire for students to interact with their communities in ways that they feel are important and that make a

difference. The goal of the community service endorsement should be to incentivize and recognize high school students choosing to volunteer in their communities. Not only will students become more active and connected within their communities but they will also be learning valuable skills such as interpersonal communication, project planning, time management, and civic engagement.

The Louisiana Community Service Diploma Endorsement program can look to the successful programs nationwide in regards to structure and management. and many of these have shown community service can best be managed at the local level. Therefore, we believe this program should be optional for school districts and those participating should be allowed to adopt a program that works best for their students within a state developed framework. For example, the needs of each community service program could differ significantly between the urban and rural parishes and the community service opportunities that are already available to students. With the Community Service Diploma Endorsement program, Louisiana will become one of the very first states to offer a voluntary program that recognizes and encourages community involvement."

\* \* \*

### **"Methodology**

The idea for the Community Service Diploma Endorsement originated with the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC). Convinced of the value of community service for students and for the state, members of the LYAC discussed and researched various options before proposing the diploma endorsement for community service. They promoted the idea and found legislators to sponsor the resolutions. Following passage of the resolutions and Act 295 of the 2012 Regular Session, staff from the Department of Education and Volunteer Louisiana in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor met several times to discuss program specifics including cost and staffing burdens and research on programs offered in other states. The group agreed on a proposal that would allow school districts to provide students the opportunity to earn a Community Service Diploma Endorsement and included a minimum number of community service hours each year. The proposal was also presented at a meeting of the Superintendents' Advisory Council. The superintendents on the council provided feedback in support of an optional program with district flexibility."

\* \* \*

### **"Recommendation**

The goal of the Community Service Diploma Endorsement is to engage students in their communities and to provide a process for them to apply what they have learned in the classrooms into a social setting. Community Service also allows for students to explore their interests, passions, and potential career aspirations in an engaged hands-on environment. It is suggested that students complete community service hours throughout their high school career so that they have an opportunity to fully explore these opportunities..."

Below is the community service participation plan with the required hours needed to

receive the endorsement at graduation, adopted pursuant to the new Rule:

Freshman	10 Hours
Sophomore	20 Hours
Junior	25 Hours
Senior	25 Hours
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80 Hours</b>

<b>Responsibilities</b>	
Student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform community service over time (grades 9-12, with increasing amount of required hours over time)</li> <li>2. Request approval of activity by school using a form provided by the Department of Education</li> <li>3. Turn in community service form with activity, hours, and signature and contact information of the person supervising the activity</li> </ol>
School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adhere to the guidelines established by the state and the district</li> <li>2. Assign staff to serve as contact/coordinator of Community Service efforts to approve community service activities, and validate community service hour forms (or do this at the district level)</li> <li>3. Optional: Identify or provide community service efforts</li> </ol>
District	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decide whether to offer the Community Service Diploma Endorsement</li> <li>2. Develop rules and regulations for the Community Service Diploma Endorsement</li> <li>3. Assign staff to coordinate/monitor community service efforts</li> </ol>
State	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish requirements for the endorsement (e.g., # hours required, tracking requirements, date of completion and any other elements deemed appropriate)</li> <li>2. Add to transcript system</li> <li>3. Provide a seal for the diploma</li> </ol>

A full copy of the BESE Report may be viewed online at:  
[https://www.boarddocs.com/la/bese/Board.nsf/files/92FKG851C395/\\$file/AG\\_4-1\\_Community\\_Service\\_Diploma\\_Endorsement\\_Dec12.pdf](https://www.boarddocs.com/la/bese/Board.nsf/files/92FKG851C395/$file/AG_4-1_Community_Service_Diploma_Endorsement_Dec12.pdf)

## **2012 Presidential Mock Election**

In the fall of 2012, the Louisiana Secretary of State (with the support of Cox Communications, the Old State Capitol Foundation and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana) invited students from each school district to participate in an opportunity to learn about the democratic process as they cast their online votes in the Louisiana 2012 Presidential Mock Election (student voting began on October 22 and ended on October 31). A mock election gives students who are not eligible to cast an "official" vote an opportunity to participate in the presidential election and vote for their favorite candidate. The votes that were cast by students were tallied with other students across the state. This process, and the Celebration Event at the Old State Capitol, which occurred on November 1, 2012, promoted critical thinking, historical awareness and the active participation in the democratic process. The goal of this experience was to inspire students to be lifelong voters by increasing the voter turnout for future generations. The members of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council were also invited to participate in the Celebration Event. The LYAC president, Uday Toodi, was in the formal program and led the participating students in the Pledge of Allegiance.



More details on the 2012 Presidential Mock Election can be found by visiting the website of the Secretary of State at [www.GeauxVote.com/mockelection](http://www.GeauxVote.com/mockelection).

### **Photo Gallery**



## **Invitation to Witness the Electoral College Process**

On December 17, 2012, in state capitols across the country, members of the Electoral College met to cast the final votes for the President and Vice-President of the United States, with the popular vote from state to state dictating whether the Republican or Democratic electors had the opportunity to cast the official votes for each respective state.

The members of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council had the distinct honor of being invited by the Secretary of State to attend the proceedings and witness this historical process.

Pictured below are the members of the "Electoral College" as they cast their official votes in the Presidential Election on December 17, 2012.



Pictured below are the LYAC members who attended:

Top - Uday Toodi (LYAC president), Nooreen Moosa, Secretary of State Tom Schedler, Rache'l Oatis, and Robert Lancon (head senior advisor)

Bottom - LYAC members with Commissioner of Agriculture & Forestry Mike Strain



**Below** - LYAC members in attendance (Toodi, Oatis, Lancon, and Moosa)



## **Promoting Municipal Youth Councils**

A goal of LYAC is to engage more students in their hometowns by encouraging them to be interested and involved in their communities and local government. Youth often feel that they don't have a voice in government because they are too young to vote. However, LYAC disproves this misconception by encouraging local officials to provide a forum for youth perspectives to be heard. Engaging youth can be a valuable resource when policymakers are making decisions that affect teens in the community. Youth across the country are working with elected officials and other city leaders to address some of these important issues. Youth are discovering that using their voices in a meaningful way can and will make a difference.

Mayors across the country are creating "mayors youth advisory councils (MYAC)" consisting of students from local schools. A number of MYACs have also been created in Louisiana — Baton Rouge, DeRidder, Thibodaux, only to name a few. These councils are beneficial for both students and policymakers. Some of the benefits of a local youth council are:

- Gives a strong voice to youth on issues that affect teens in their communities, develops leadership skills, and provides a forum that serves as a training ground for youth on public speaking.
- Motivates and empowers our next generation of civic leaders to take an active role in their hometown government.
- Strengthens the connections between youth and their communities, and strengthens communication between youth and their local leaders.
- Allows for students throughout the community to have proper representation in their local government.
- Actively engages young people in civic education that will support lifelong civic participation.
- Provides a "living" civics lesson and helps young people to understand how their government works.
- Raises youth awareness on local issues.
- Provides youth insight on issues directly affecting them in schools and the community.
- Unifies the youth voice through outreach and volunteer activities.

LYAC students are currently working with some of their mayors to create a youth advisory council in their hometowns. Progress will be updated in the next Annual Report.

## 4-H Day at the Capitol

At the end of each May, during the legislative session, State 4-H officials host "4-H Day at the Capitol", which is held on the front steps of the State Capitol in Baton Rouge. Each year, a member of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council who is also a 4-H member is invited to be a part of the formal program and speak to hundreds of students gathered in front of the Capitol. Legislators also participate by addressing the students who have traveled to Baton Rouge from their legislative districts. In May, 2013, approximately 1,500 4-H students attended this special day. It is an honor to have the opportunity to be a part of this event.

Below: (Left) As a member of LYAC, Austin Gaspard represented the voices of Louisiana youth as well as those voices of 4-H students. (Right) LYAC members in attendance to show support for the event



Among those many legislators who participated, below are a few pictures of senators and representatives as they addressed the 4-H students.



# **AWARDS**

## Robert Lancon Receives Louisiana Civics in Action Award

Presented by the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education, the Civics in Action Award was established to recognize an outstanding middle or high school student who has demonstrated outstanding civic virtue and involvement in his or her community.

The 2012 Civics in Action Award was presented to Robert Lancon by La. Supreme Court Justice Marcus Clark at the Louisiana State Bar Association Mid-Year Meeting. Lancon, a senior at Highland Baptist Christian School in New Iberia, "is a leader today growing toward what I'm certain will be a leader for tomorrow as his life impacts our community and state for the positive" says Christie Guillory, Social Studies Teacher and Section Leader at the school.



Lancon, an active member of the 4-H Club, has served as the 4-H Secretary of the State Citizenship Board and as an officer of the 4-H Executive Committee. He also served as Head Senior Advisor of the 2012-2013 La. Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) and acted as the chair of two LYAC Committees: the Community Service Committee and the Global Youth Service Day Committee. In 2012, he was instrumental in getting two LYAC resolutions put into the legislative process, which were ultimately authored by the chairmen of both the House and Senate committees on education, Representative Steve Carter (House Resolution 9) and Senator Conrad Appel (Senate Resolution 11). The resolutions addressed the engagement of high school students in community service by requesting the State Board



of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the feasibility of establishing a "Distinction for Community Service" high school diploma endorsement for students who complete a specified number of documented service hours during their high school careers. He also spoke with Representative Regina Barrow and told her of the merits of having students volunteer in their communities and rewarding them for their service. Following this discussion, Representative Barrow authored Act 295.

"I have observed Robert in many settings — from providing leadership to a board meeting, to presenting workshops, to working with younger youth during special interest programs, to facilitating discussions, to talking to legislators and university officials, to serving as a camp counselor. In all cases, Robert was a major contributor who always went beyond the call of duty. He is truly one in a million." *Janet Fox, Ph.D. LSU Professor and Associate Department Head, 4-H Youth Development*

# APPENDIX



## LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### APPLY NOW FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPACT STATE POLICY AFFECTING LOUISIANA'S YOUTH

There is a place for young people to make a difference in state government by serving as a member of the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council, a body composed entirely of high school students with the purpose of addressing issues affecting the youth of Louisiana. The Louisiana Commission on Civic Education is now accepting applications for membership on the youth council.

The purpose of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council is to facilitate the communication between youth and the legislature and give students an opportunity to be involved in the workings of government. Students who are selected to serve will have the opportunity to study and address issues of importance to youth, including education, employment, strategies to increase youth participation in local and state government, substance abuse, underage drinking, physical fitness and health, litter and environmental control, and others. The Louisiana Commission on Civic Education oversees the work of the youth council and participates in the appointment of the council membership.

Twenty-one youth members are appointed each year, which includes two student members representing each of the congressional districts and at-large members. Youth members must be between the ages of 14 and 19, and be enrolled in a public or private high school, a home school program, or a GED skills program for the 2013-2014 school year.

**Application deadline: Must be postmarked or submitted online no later than March 15, 2013.**

To Apply for Membership:	
1.	<b>PART I, STUDENT APPLICATION</b> (required): Fill out the student application form completely OR fill out the online form.
2.	<b>PART II, PARENTAL CONSENT FORM</b> (required): Parent or legal guardian must sign and submit a consent form for a student applicant to be considered.
3.	<b>PART III, RECOMMENDATION FORM &amp; LETTER</b> (at least one required): The recommendation form must be given to a school administrator, teacher, or representative of a community or school-sponsored club or organization (with a civic mission) to complete and submit a letter of recommendation (maximum of two letters).
4.	<b>SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION:</b> A. <b><u>For Paper Application, Letters of Recommendation, &amp; Consent Form</u></b> Mail to: La. Commission on Civic Education c/o Louisiana Senate Post Office Box 94183 Baton Rouge, LA 70804 B. <b><u>Online Application Form:</u></b> If a student completes an online application form, then the required parental consent form & letters of recommendation <b>must</b> be mailed to the above address. Application forms may be accessed and submitted online at <a href="http://civiced.louisiana.gov/">http://civiced.louisiana.gov/</a> . All forms are contained in the PDF application.
5.	For more information, call (225) 342-6145.

# Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council Application

## Application Deadline is March 15, 2013

### PART I. STUDENT APPLICATION

IMPORTANT: Parts I through III must be completed and forwarded to the *Louisiana Commission on Civic Education, c/o Louisiana Senate, Post Office Box 94183, Baton Rouge, LA 70804*. All personal identifiable information contained in this application is confidential.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

and/or Cell Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Parent E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION

I attend (check the appropriate box):  Public/Private High School  Home School  GED Skills Program

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level in High School (for 2012-2013 school year): Check one:  9<sup>th</sup>  10<sup>th</sup>  11<sup>th</sup>  12<sup>th</sup>

In which Congressional District is your school located? \_\_\_\_\_ (You may find the congressional district by accessing [www.legis.la.gov](http://www.legis.la.gov). On the home page, enter the school address to find your district.)

### SHORT ESSAY

We would like to learn more about you and why you are interested in representing youth in Louisiana. On a separate page, briefly answer the following questions. All answers should be typewritten, if possible.

1. Why do you want to serve as a member of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council, and, if selected, how will your experience on the youth council affect your goals and life choices on civic involvement?
2. What do you think is the most important issue facing Louisiana youth today? How would you hope to affect this issue using your experience as a LYAC member?
3. To date, what has been your greatest achievement or accomplishment, whether civically, creatively, or academically?
4. If you could meet any Louisiana public figure (past or present), who would he or she be and why?
5. Every effort is made to ensure the council members represent the diverse population of Louisiana. Please describe what viewpoint you can bring to LYAC, what makes it unique, and why it is important that these viewpoints are represented. (For the purposes of this question, "diverse" means a council that offers a strength of multicultural backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and physical abilities/qualities.)
6. Have you attended any LYAC meeting? If the answer is yes, indicate how many meetings attended.
7. List any skill or talent you have that may contribute to the work of the youth council.
8. List your school/community clubs, organizations, and activities, including any offices or leadership positions held.

# Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council Application

## Application Deadline is March 15, 2013

### **PART II. PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM**

The Louisiana Commission on Civic Education actively invites and encourages all high school students in grades 9 through 12, ages 14 to 19, to submit an application for membership on the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council. If your child is selected, every effort will be made to minimize any burden of council activities on your child's school responsibilities and other personal priorities, including any unnecessary personal financial burden on you and your family. However, you will be responsible for providing transportation to and from any meeting or event of the youth council.

#### **PERMISSION TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP ON THE LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, is interested in becoming a member of the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council and I support and authorize his/her participation, if selected. I understand that I am responsible for the transportation of my child to and from any youth council meeting or event.

#### **PHOTO RELEASE**

I understand that the youth council may attract attention from the media and that my child may be photographed or filmed during any meeting or event. Therefore, I hereby grant permission to use photographs, video recordings, or other electronic or printed communications of my child, if selected. I understand that such photographs, recordings or other communications may be used for public display on the official website of the Commission on Civic Education or in other publications referencing the participation of students as members of the youth council.

#### **RELEASE FROM LIABILITY**

I, the undersigned, expressly release the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education, and any of its members and staff, any participating public official, or any other participating agency/organization from any and all claims, which may arise during the term of my child's membership, if he/she is selected.

---

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

# Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council Application

## Application Deadline is March 15, 2013

### PART III. RECOMMENDATION FORM & LETTER

A student may be considered for membership on the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council only upon the recommendation of one of the following: (1) a school administrator, (2) teacher, (3) representative of a home school program, (4) representative of a GED skills program, or (5) a representative of a school-sponsored or community service club or organization which has a civic mission. One additional letter of recommendation may be included.

As the appointing authority, the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education would greatly appreciate your help in the selection process. Please complete this form and write a letter that includes a recommendation for the applicant in terms of his or her civic interest, work ethic, leadership ability, ability to communicate effectively, and sense of responsibility. When completed, forward this Part and the letter of recommendation to the *Louisiana Commission on Civic Education, c/o Louisiana Senate, Post Office Box 94183, Baton Rouge, LA 70804*. The letter will be placed with the appropriate student application.

#### **Subpart A: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name (person making the recommendation): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone number (daytime): \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:       School Administrator                       Teacher  
                     Representative of home school program       Representative of GED skills program  
                     Representative of a school or community club/organization with a civic mission  
Name of club or organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student making application: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Address of School: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Congressional District in which School is Located: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Subpart B: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

A letter of recommendation is required in order for an application to be considered. Please submit the letter with this form to the address listed above.

Signature: of Person Making the Recommendation

Date

## Optional Section (student):

How did you hear about the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council?

- Newspaper
- Television
- Legislator or other public official
- Teacher or school administrator
- Club or organization [Which one? \_\_\_\_\_]
- LYAC Member
- Internet/Website

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If your application is not selected, would you still like to be involved and attend the LYAC meetings?

- Yes. Let me know when and where the LYAC meetings will be held.  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not at this time.

# LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL 2013 LEADERSHIP AWARD

## *General Information*

### **Introduction**

The Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) seeks to publicly recognize young people for demonstrating outstanding leadership and/or citizenship in their communities by selecting and honoring a young leader in each congressional district in the state, including a state award winner. In accordance with its mission, the members of LYAC encourage teens across the state to become civically engaged in and render service to their communities and to promote a meaningful youth voice on issues affecting youth in their daily lives.

The purpose of the LYAC Leadership Award is to recognize teens who:

- Serve as a positive example to other young people
- Achieve a significant civic accomplishment at school or in the community
- Demonstrate outstanding youth leadership
- Promote responsible citizenship

### **The Award:**

- This is a peer-to-peer honor. The LYAC youth members will evaluate and review each nomination.
- Certificates of achievement will be awarded by the LYAC youth members to each winner.

### **Nominations:\***

- Anyone, except a LYAC member or his/her immediate family, can nominate a teen.
- At least one, but no more than two letters of recommendation from someone other than the nominator must accompany the letter of nomination.
- The nomination may include supporting materials such as copies of newspaper articles, etc. Any materials submitted will not be returned.

**\* No member of the LYAC group is eligible to receive an award.**

### **Qualifications:**

- Youth between the ages of 14 and 19 and attending a Louisiana high school or home school at the time of nomination
- Must be a Louisiana resident

### **DEADLINE:**

Nominations must be postmarked or submitted no later than **February 28, 2013**.

### **Please mail your completed nomination forms to:**

Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council  
c/o Louisiana Senate  
Post Office Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804  
OR

Nomination forms may be scanned and e-mailed to:

[breaux@legis.la.gov](mailto:breaux@legis.la.gov)

Should you have any questions, call Sherri Breaux at (225) 342-6145

**LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE  
YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL  
LEADERSHIP AWARD**

**NOMINATION FORM**

*(A separate page containing the information below may be used, if necessary)*

<b><i>PART I. Student Information (Nominee)</i></b>	
<b><i>Name</i></b>	
<b><i>Age</i></b>	
<b><i>Mailing Address</i></b>	
<b><i>Name of School and Address</i></b>	
<b><i>Grade</i></b>	
<b><i>Congressional District in which school is located</i></b>	
<b><i>Honors/Awards received</i></b>	
<b><i>Involvement in school clubs and organizations</i></b>	
<b><i>Involvement in Community Service Activities</i></b>	
<b><i>Leadership Roles</i></b>	
<b><i>Parent/Guardian Name</i></b>	
<b><i>Parent/Guardian Telephone</i></b>	
<b><i>Parent E-mail Address</i></b>	

NOMINEE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Part II. Nominator's Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>School or Organization</b>	
<b>Title</b>	
<b>E-mail Address</b>	
<b>Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Relation to Student</b> (Ex.: Parent, Teacher, Club Sponsor, Peer, Friend, etc.)	

### **Part III. Short Answer (Nominator)**

**Nominator:** Please answer on a separate page and submit with the nomination form. Important: include the name of student nominee on any additional page.

1. How long have you known this young person?
2. Why have you nominated the young person for this award?
3. What have they done to distinguish themselves as a young leader and in what specific ways has he or she worked to make a positive change for their school or in their community?
4. Describe one characteristic that demonstrates the young person's unique leadership ability.
5. Is there any other information you would like to share with the selection committee about this young leader?

### **Part IV. Letter(s) of Recommendation**

At least one, but no more than two letters of recommendation from someone other than the nominator must accompany the letter of nomination.

### **Part V. Student Essay (Nominee)**

In an essay of no more than 300 words, please describe an event, in which you were involved, that has impacted your leadership skills and assets. How has this event affected your outlook on the school and/or community? How has your participation in this event affected your growth as a leader? Do not use this essay to list club activities and other leadership roles. This information will be listed in Part I on the nomination form. Put your word count at the end of the essay.

# Acknowledgments

The Legislative Youth Advisory Council is sincerely appreciative to the efforts of the following individuals who have contributed to the work of the council:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| La. Commission on Civic Education                            | (1) For their thoughtful oversight of LYAC<br>(2) For participation by its members in LYAC meetings and activities throughout the year  |
| Louisiana City Attorneys Association                         | For its support for and assistance in the Annual Orientation and Leadership Seminar of the youth council, as well as participating as speakers at meetings to inform youth members on the functions of local government   |
| Statewide Elected Officials                                  | For meeting with the members of LYAC at the Leadership Seminar and engaging them in other activities throughout the year, including Governor Bobby Jindal, Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne, Secretary of State Tom Schedler, and Commissioner of Agriculture Mike Strain   |
| Members of the Louisiana Senate and House of Representatives | (1) For taking their time during the year to engage with the youth of Louisiana through this youth council by speaking and listening to their perspectives on teen issues<br>(2) For attending the schools of LYAC Members in the partnership with their hometown legislators as part of the Legislators Back to School Program<br>(3) In particular, a note of appreciation to the following legislators for meeting with LYAC or being a part of their activities: Senator Sharon Weston-Broome, Senator Conrad Appel, Senator Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb, Senator Rick Ward, Senator Karen Carter-Peterson, Senator Robert Adley, Senator Dan Morrish, Senator Rick Gallot, Senator Mike Walsworth, Senator Barrow Peacock, Representative Ted James, Representative Steve Carter, Representative Patrick Jefferson, Representative Terry Brown, Representative Barry Ivey, Representative Herbert Dixon, Representative Johnny Guinn, and Representative Regina Barrow. |
| Louisiana Department of Education                            | For meeting with the LYAC members and providing a meaningful forum for students to speak out on   |

education issues facing the state, particularly State Superintendent John White, Erin Bendily, and Robert Schaff

Louisiana World Peace Day Committee For working in partnership with the council to host the Louisiana World Peace Day activities at the State Capitol each fall

Louisiana Public Broadcasting For inviting LYAC members to participate and share a youth perspective on their public affairs program, Louisiana Public Square, each month

Volunteer Louisiana For working in concert with LYAC members on the community service diploma endorsement proposal, particularly Janet Pace, Nicholas Auck, and Jason Miller

State Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE) For their thoughtful study of HR 9, SR 11, and Act 295 of the 2012 Regular Session, preparation of the report to the legislative committees, and adoption of the Rule to implement the Distinction for Community Service High School Diploma Endorsement program for Louisiana high school students

Jerry Guillot, Senate Chief of Staff For his assistance and guidance with LYAC activities

Nanette Longuepee  
Administrative Secretary (Senate) For her assistance with council meetings and activities throughout the year

Robert Lancon, Head Senior Advisor For his work ethic and leadership to the youth council, particularly the effort to bring the Distinction for Community Service High School Diploma Endorsement program from "concept" to reality

LYAC Parents For their support of LYAC and their commitment to the participation of their children in this program

It is has been my great honor to staff and work with Louisiana's youth of the La. Legislative Youth Advisory Council, who are some of the finest young leaders in our nation.

Sherri H. Breaux  
Staff, La. Legislative Youth Advisory Council  
August, 2007 to July, 2013