

# YLA Newsletter



YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

A Not-For-Profit 501 c 3 Corporation

## YLA Kicks Off Online Fundraising Campaign for the Holiday Season

The Youth Leadership Academy has helped over 100 at-risk students gain access to higher education since its first graduating class in 2002. HOW DO WE DO THIS? With a small, dedicated, hard-working group of staff and volunteers who believe in the power of an education! Please help the YLA to continue making a



difference in our community by giving a financial gift. All donations will directly impact the organization's delivery of educational programs for students and their parents. It's easy to give. Simply go to the YLA web site: [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org) and click on the link under "Give Online" on the right hand side. This will take you our page at Firstgiving, a web site that helps non-profits like us to meet fundraising goals. Their portal is secure and easy to use. The best part is this: 100% of your gift makes it to YLA!

This is YLA's first online giving campaign! Please help us make it a successful one! The

YLA is a 501c3 non-profit organization. All donations to the YLA are tax deductible! 'Tis the season of giving ... thank you for your generous support!

### Dear Friends of YLA: Please Help Us Win \$500!

YLA cadets will be participating in Elgin Downtown Neighborhood Association's Rockin' in a Window Wonderland Decorating Contest. First place prize is \$500 and the public can vote online at [www.DowntownElgin.com](http://www.DowntownElgin.com) from November 28 through December 5. Cadets: sign up at the YLA office to help decorate our window on Monday and Tuesday afternoons November 21 and 22. Dress for the weather! The group will have a lot fun decorating the window together while drinking hot chocolate and eating cookies.



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The YLA Newsletter is produced the YLA office and is distributed once per month. Any comments, questions or letters can be addressed to YLA 410 Renner Dr., Elgin, IL 60123.

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#### Inside this issue:

*MLK Art/Essay Contest* 2

*Service-Learning Research Assistance Available* 2

*YLA Adopt a Highway Clean Up Day will be Nov. 19* 3

*Reminder of YLA's Increment Weather Policy* 3

*YLA Welcomed into CollegeKeys Compact Network* 3

*SAVE THE DATE for YLA's 2nd Annual Benefit Dinner* 4



## Calling All Student Writers and Artists!

Are you into creative writing? How about painting? Or photography? Or even making videos? YLA cadets who are residents of Elgin are invited to enter the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ART AND ESSAY CONTEST. First place wins \$100 US savings bond, and there are more prizes. The winner of the art contest will have their artwork printed on a T-shirt for all participants in the upcoming MLK Day of Service and Youth Leadership Conference on Monday, January 16, 2012. For details about how you can enter, contact the YLA office at 847-214-6910. All entries are due by December 2nd.

### Congratulations to Brittany Rosas!

Brittany Rosas, YLA 11th grade cadet from Batavia, was the winner in the “best performance” category at the Gail Borden Library’s Hispanic Heritage Month—Youth Poetry Contest. Brittany wrote an original poem titled “Absence of a Figure” and performed it at the event on October 8 along with seven other students. Other YLA cadets who participated in this event were Amanda Craig from Carpentersville and Jackie Lopez from Carpentersville.



On October 8, YLA cadets took part in several field trips. Those YLA cadets pictured above toured Judson University on their Campus Preview Day which included presentations by faculty on various majors available at Judson. Thank you to all at Judson for organizing a great morning for us! Thank you also to Elgin Community College and the Elgin History Museum for hosting two other cadet field trips on that day.

### Service Learning Research Assistance Available

YLA cadets have started their 2011-2012 Service Learning projects and are following the 5 Steps of Service Learning. The first step in this 5 step process is researching the community issue that they will be addressing in their projects. The goal is to have the research inform the planning of the project to better impact the core issue. Cadets, if you need help with your research, please come to the Gail Borden Library during the dates and times listed below. A member of the YLA team will be in the computer lab wearing a YLA shirt and ready to help you!

#### Date – time – Research Assistant:

Sunday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> — 2:00 pm-4:00 pm – Dianha Ortega-Ehreth

Wednesday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> — 4:00 pm–6:00 pm – Kevin Stark

Thursday, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> — 4:00 pm-6:00 pm – Joann Hartmann

Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> — 2:00 pm-4:00 pm – Dianha Ortega-Ehreth

Tuesday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> — 3:00 pm-5:00 pm – Kate Kinsley

## YLA ADOPT A HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP WILL BE NOVEMBER 19

Bowes Road in Elgin is adopted by the Youth Leadership Academy, meaning YLA cadets help keep it clean for the community. The fall clean-up date has been scheduled for the afternoon of November 19 following the YLA session that concludes at 12:00 noon. Cadets can call the YLA office to sign-up (and earn extra volunteer hours for the Semester of Volunteering Challenge), and groups will depart from the MPC building after a safety orientation to be led by Mr. Kevin. Parents are welcome!

## Reminder of YLA's Increment Weather Policy

Reminder — if the weather outside is frightful and you are wondering if a YLA activity is going to take place, here is what you can do:

- CALL YLA OFFICE at 847-214-6910. The outgoing message will state if a YLA session is cancelled for any reason.
- If you have internet, go to [www.elgin.edu](http://www.elgin.edu). Elgin Community College may close facilities if weather is bad. Announcements would be made on this web site by 7am.
- Call 847-697-1000. This is the ECC number for weather-related closings. If ECC facilities are closed, YLA sessions will be cancelled.
- Sign up through [emergency.elgin.edu](http://emergency.elgin.edu) to have ECC send a text message directly to your cell phone alerting you of any cancellations.

The #1 rule is: be safe! Please drive carefully during the upcoming winter months. Don't forget to call the YLA Carpool List if you need a ride!



## YLA Welcomed as a Member Institution into the CollegeKeys Compact Network

The YLA has recently become a member of a College Board network called CollegeKeys Compact. The Compact seeks to support students from low-income families as they work toward preparing for, getting into and succeeding in college. The YLA is one of more than 550 institutions to join this bold call to action to U.S. schools and colleges issued by the College Board. As a member of this network, the YLA will begin an important assessment of how it dedicates resources to help students get into and excel in college. The result will be an action plan that will strengthen its ability to support students in getting to and graduating from college.

The Compact is the result of a report by the College Board Trustees task force which found that nearly one-half of all college-qualified low-and moderate-income high school graduates do not enroll in a four-year college program because of a combination of poor preparation, low expectations and financial barriers. Citing evidence that high-achieving students from low-income families have about the same chance of attending college as low achievers from wealthier families, the report points to an array of obstacles blocking low-income students from access and then from success once they are enrolled. In addition to poor preparation for the emotional and academic rigors of higher education, students face challenges in getting the aid necessary to fund their education.

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. To learn more about this organization and the Compact network, visit their web site at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

Stay tuned to learn more about the YLA's Compact assessment and action plan!

### Quote of the month:

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.” — *Kahlil Gibran*

# Youth Leadership Academy

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*"I AM on the path to success.  
I AM college bound."*

**Visit us online at  
[www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org)**

## Mission of the Youth Leadership Academy:

We engage and inspire youth to maximize their potential to become successful community leaders through the access and responsible utilization of post-secondary education.

## YLA Office Hours:

- Monday—Friday, 9:00 am—3:00 pm
- No office hours on Saturday

## YLA Board members:

- Dr. Wes Scott, President, Elgin
- JoAnne Fields Whittaker, Vice President, Elgin
- Kevin Stark, Treasurer, Algonquin
- Jeri E. Smith, Secretary, Elgin
- Eric Isibue, West Dundee
- Eary Isibue, Elgin
- V. Elaine Miller, Elgin
- Dr. Bruce Austin, Grayslake

- Dr. Julie Schaid, Elburn
- Betty Villagomez, Elgin
- Simeon Kim, St. Charles
- Sgt. Gary Neal Jr., Huntley
- Mercedes Delcid, Carpentersville
- Ann Marie Sparks, Elgin

**YLA Executive Director:** Dianha Ortega-Ehreth; **YLA Program Coordinator:** Joann W. Hartmann; **YLA Administrative Assistant:** Karen McCoy

## Sign up for November Gift-wrapping Fundraisers

YLA cadets, parents and volunteers are once again invited to sign-up to help with giftwrapping as our holiday fundraiser. This time we will be at Barnes and Noble in Schaumburg on the following dates:

- Saturday, November 26 — shift available between 10:00 am and 8:00 pm
- Saturday, November 27—shifts available between 12:00 noon and 8:00 pm.
- Monday, December 19—shifts available between 11:00 am and 7:00 pm.

All proceeds will go towards funding YLA program supplies. To sign up, simply call the YLA office at 847-214-6965. **Thank you!**

# SAVE THE DATE

for YLA's Second Annual

## BENEFIT DINNER

When: Friday, January 27, 2012

Where: Elgin Community College —

University Business Center

Mark your calendars and tell your friends!

More details coming soon!

