



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

March 10, 2023

On behalf of our team at YMCA of the North and all the youth we serve, I am writing to express our deep gratitude for the resources the Legislature has devoted to helping youth gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to participate fully as citizens.

Most students will take no more than one civic education class, despite the fact that civic skills like critical thinking, public speaking and collaboration are crucial for success in adulthood.

At the YMCA's Center for Youth Voice, we offer experiential civic learning to help develop Minnesota's next generation of civic leaders. Our programs serve youth from across the state, with a focus on including those who have historically been excluded, including youth of color and those in rural areas.

Minnesota Legacy Amendment funding helps us bring time-tested programs such as Model UN and Youth in Government to youth in every corner of the state. It also supports the development of new programs such as Students Voting, a statewide mock election that 150,000 Minnesota students in over 300 schools participated in last year.

Active and responsible citizens identify and analyze public problems, respectfully deliberate with others, take constructive action together, reflect on their actions, and influence institutions. These are the skills that Minnesota young people learn and practice in Center for Youth Voice programs.

We are grateful for the Legislature's continued support of educational experiences that spark young peoples' passion for civic participation, whether through careers as public servants or as fully engaged community members and neighbors. Once again, thank you for investing in the future of civic life in Minnesota.

If you have any questions at all about our work at the YMCA, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Glen Gunderson  
President  
YMCA of the North