



Dane County Youth Governance Program

Sept 1, 2020* – May 31, 2021 (start date shifted for 2020)

Purpose and Goal

The Dane County Youth Governance Program (YGP) offers greater opportunities for youth leadership development and youth empowerment in Dane County through direct participation in county government decision-making; provides real-life learning opportunities for youth in the functioning of local government; and brings a direct youth voice to community issues and concerns while fostering the development of confident, capable and independent leaders for the next generation. Each year, 12 youth are selected for YGP.

Program Structure

Each youth representative is appointed to a Dane County Board committee for a one year term from **Sept 1st through May 31st**, and is matched with a supervisor-mentor on their committee. YGP mentors closely assist youth in learning about and contributing to the governance process. YGP youth have the same opportunities for committee participation and involvement as elected county supervisors, except that they have a non-binding advisory vote. Youth representatives may be appointed to the following committees*†:

Environment, Agriculture, & Natural Resources (EANR)

2nd & 4th Thursdays, 5:00 or 5:30pm, at Fen Oak°

Food Council

4th Wednesdays, 6:00pm, at Fen Oak°

Health & Human Needs (HHN)

2nd & 4th Thursdays, 5:30pm, at CCB°

Park Commission

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 5:30pm, at Fen Oak°

Personnel & Finance (P&F)

2nd & 4th Mondays, 5:30pm, at CCB°

Public Protection & Judiciary (PP&J)

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 5:15pm, at CCB°

Public Works & Transportation (PWT)

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 5:30pm, at AEC°

UW-Extension Committee

*Currently 2nd Tuesdays, 8:15am, at Fen Oak° – but time may be able to be changed.

Zoning & Land Regulation (ZLR)

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 6:30pm, at CCB°

**Meeting dates may change. †Mileage reimbursement is available.*

In addition to committee meetings, youth representatives will attend bimonthly YGP education meetings, which provide a space to connect with other youth representatives; deepen learning; and grow youth leadership, civic engagement, and other important professional skills.

Program Expectations

- Strive to attend all regularly-scheduled committee meetings (~11-15 per term). Must attend at least 75% of regularly-scheduled committee meetings (at least 3 out of every 4 meetings).
- If a meeting will be missed, notify mentor, committee chair, & YGP facilitator. No more than 3 absences without notice.
- Stay up to date on committee business and read necessary material in advance in order to stay engaged in committee meetings
- Strive to attend at least 4 YGP education meetings
- Total time commitment is about **6-8 hours per month.**
- At the end of the one-year term, each youth representative will give a brief presentation to county board supervisors about their YGP experience. Youth may also apply to serve in a 2nd term.

°Committee meeting locations: **CCB** (City-County Building): 210 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Madison, 53703; **Fen Oak** (Lyman Anderson Center): 5201 Fen Oak Dr, Madison, 53718; **AEC** (Alliant Energy Center): 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, 53713

Selection Process

The YGP application includes short-answer questions about applicants' objectives for participating in YGP, and a written recommendation from an adult involved with the youth (teacher, guidance counselor, parent/caregiver/guardian, etc). Applications and reference forms are due **Wednesday, May 13th, 2020**.

*[Note that the pre-application nomination form is **no longer required**. If you'd like application materials (e)mailed directly to particular youth with a message that they've been nominated to apply to YGP, feel free to fill out the nomination form at bit.ly/YGPapp (know that this step is now optional).]*

YGP Applicant requirements:

- Dane County residents currently in grades 9-11 (*who will be in grades 10-12 in fall of 2020*)
- **Ability to commit 6-8 hours per month for YGP responsibilities, including attending 2-3 weeknight meetings each month. Regular attendance is essential.**
 - o **Most meetings start between 5:15 and 6:00pm, and last approximately 1½ hrs.**
 - o **Due to the time frame, involvement in sports or multiple extracurriculars may conflict with ability to commit to YGP** – if concerned, but interested in YGP, please contact Jess (below) to discuss.
- Strong interest in community engagement
- High level of maturity
- Good communication & self-expression skills (or willing to develop)
- Responsible, dependable, & self-motivated
- Positive attitude
- Interest in developing skills in leadership, professionalism, and working with adults
- Transportation to/from committee meetings in Madison (bus passes are available)

YGP seeks to recruit a cohort that reflects Dane County's diversity in every form including geography, race, ethnicity, gender identity, ability status, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, and all other identities. All Dane County youth are encouraged to apply.

*YGP applicants are **strongly encouraged** to attend a committee meeting before they decide whether to apply to YGP. **Please go to bit.ly/YGPCmte for more details about attending committee meetings** (or contact Jess, below). All posted committee meetings are open to the public to attend and observe. Another **strongly encouraged** option is to watch a county board meeting online; all are available to watch at bit.ly/CBmtgs.

After Extension Dane County staff conduct an initial applicant screening, Dane County UW Extension Committee supervisors collaborate to conduct brief interviews with screened applicants, and vote to approve up to 12 YGP applicant finalists. **In 2020, youth members will be notified of their acceptance in June, and undergo program orientation, with committee appointments, in August.**

Visit <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/youthgovernanceprogram/> for more YGP details, including the YGP Handbook and FAQs at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/youthgovernanceprogram/about-ygp/>.

Thank you for your interest in the Dane County Youth Governance Program!

For more information, please contact: Javier Neira, Positive Youth Development Extension Educator (Bilingual English/Spanish), Extension Dane County, (608) 224-3717, neira.javier@countyofdane.com

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Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. To make a request, please call 608-224-3717 as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.