



YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**YMCA to host 59<sup>th</sup> Youth & Government State Conference at Capitol**

**OKLAHOMA CITY (February 4, 2010)** – More than 250 student delegates from across Oklahoma will take seats in state government and meet elected officials during the 59<sup>th</sup> annual YMCA Youth & Government State Conference Feb. 11-13 at the Capitol.

“We aim to provide a meaningful experience for young people through hands-on learning in a mock legislature that will hopefully inspire them to become active and concerned participants in government,” said Stan Barton, YMCA Youth & Government Program State Director.

Student delegates will assume the roles of senator, representative, or press during the conference. The model youth legislature meets in a two-day legislative session presided over by their own student-elected statewide officials, including governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, senate president pro tempore, secretary of state, attorney general, chief justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, presiding judge of the state court of appeals and state newspaper editor.

Students serving as elected officials will meet their real counterparts during the Governor’s luncheon featuring Lieutenant Governor Jari Askins, Senate President Pro Tempore Glenn Coffee, Chief Justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court James Edmondson, Presiding Judge of the Oklahoma Court of Appeals Charles Johnson, Secretary of State Susan Savage and State Superintendent Sandy Garrett. Youth & Government participants will also hear from KTOK Radio Talk Show Host Mark Shannon during the conference keynote address.

“Our program and conference builds a sense of responsibility and passion for issues, the desire to make a difference, citizenship skills, and values in the lives of teens.” Barton said. “Ultimately, we help mold character in students with a strong focus on leadership development.”

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Prior to the Youth & Government State Conference, students learn how to research public policy issues, write real legislation, practice public speaking and debating skills, and work together to achieve a goal through Youth & Government clubs at local Ys across the state.

**About the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City**

The YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City is a charitable, not-for-profit organization that serves children, families and adults of all ages, regardless of gender, race, abilities, or income. Major program areas include aquatic and water safety, youth sports, before and afterschool childcare, camping, health and wellness, teen leadership and community development. The YMCA served nearly 130,000 people in the greater Oklahoma City area last year. For more information please call (405) 297-7777 or visit [www.ymcaokc.org](http://www.ymcaokc.org).

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