

# YOUTH POLICY SUMMIT

INNOVATION. LEADERSHIP. SOLUTIONS.



*"YPS opened my eyes to the 'real world.' Not everyone will agree with you, but compromise and negotiation can relieve the tension.*

*Take the initiative to negotiate; change is not impossible."* —YPS student

## The Need

Today's youth are inheriting an unprecedented array of challenges in the energy, environment, and health sectors. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, effectively addressing such issues will require the next generation of leaders "to know how to use their knowledge and skills by thinking critically, applying knowledge to new situations, analyzing information, comprehending new ideas, communicating, collaborating, solving problems, and making decisions."

The Keystone Center recognizes the innovation and creativity inherent in youthful minds. We help tomorrow's leaders acquire practical skills and learn how to direct their energy in ways that will result in positive action and a brighter future.

## The Program

The Youth Policy Summit (YPS) is the only program of its kind where participants learn and practice essential 21st century skills including creative problem solving, group collaboration and critical thinking.

Throughout the week-long Summit students address a real-life, science intensive energy, environment or health policy issue (past topics have included energy efficiency, water scarcity, and obesity). Students arrive having completed preliminary research on their topic and come together to work as a group, each representing a key stakeholder interest.

## Why The Keystone Center?

Since 1975, The Keystone Center has successfully guided leaders as they've tackled some of society's most pressing environmental, energy and public health problems. We've also had decades of experience training teachers and students to approach issues in innovative and effective ways. YPS is a natural partnership for our two areas of expertise.

Students practice The Keystone Center's flagship mediation and conflict resolution techniques through interactive exercises and dialogues. They also interact with handpicked panels of experts in industry, government, and public interest groups, hearing real-life perspectives on the tensions, challenges, and rewards of their vocations.

Keystone helps students to consider political, legal,



## KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

An independent evaluation found that students learned:

- to effectively present, discuss, and defend their research findings.
- effective multi-party mediation, negotiation, and collaboration strategies.
- to pose relevant questions to expert representatives of specific stakeholder groups. Students integrated experts' perspectives into their policy development processes.
- to effectively apply critical thinking and analysis strategies in order to better understand a real-world environmental or societal issue.
- to utilize science knowledge, critical thinking, and awareness of stakeholder group perspectives when developing policy recommendations to address a specific environmental-societal issue.
- about potential courses of study and career opportunities related to Summit topics

economic, technological, environmental, and social factors relevant to their Summit's topic, while also representing the positions and interests of stakeholder groups. Through this collaborative process, they develop both public policy and community action recommendations that focus on the critical issues being addressed at the Summit.

In the summer of 2012, Keystone is expanding YPS to be available to students from around the U.S. Summit locations include Keystone and Denver CO, New York NY, Auburn AL, Grand Rapids MI and Los Angeles CA.

## Funding

Keystone seeks funding annually to cover Youth Policy Summit program costs and scholarship requests. Our funding partners include corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals. Partners are critical both to the financial sustainability of the Summits and to content and program development. We enlist our sponsors to interact with the students, aid topic development for the programs, and help with outreach to other partners and to the media, among other things.



## JOIN THE CAUSE

For more information on how YOU can support The Keystone Center's Youth Policy Summits, contact:

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Read more at [youthpolicysummit.org](http://youthpolicysummit.org)