



TESTIMONIALS



What everyone is saying about the Young Center
and California Youth Think Tank experience

What educators are saying...

“Through conviction and foresight, the Young Center has created an exceptionally inspiring program that finally celebrates our youth for their strengths and abilities.” -
Jack O’Connell, former Supt. of Public Schools, California Dept. of Education

“I am always encouraged by programs like this that are designed to enhance the education of our youth. Thank you for your generosity and your commitment to the educational development of our youth.”
- **Dan Isaacs, Former Asst. Superintendent, LA Unified School District**

“What a wonderful demonstration of the love, energy, and dedication the Young Center has poured into our community. We are very proud of the work you and your organization are doing to uplift the hearts and minds of so many of our young people.”
- **Joyce Peyton, director, LAUSD Priority Staffing Program**

“The California Youth Think Tank represents an incredible opportunity for young people to realize their infinite potential to change the world around them. The impact this program has had on our students has been phenomenal.”
- **Dr. L. Gail Garrett, administrator, LA Unified School District**

“The Young Center has succeeded in generating the almost perfect model for youth development in the California Youth Think Tank. I encourage you to continue to refine and massage the program into perfection. It is so vitally needed.”
- **Prof. Lewis King, senior scholar, Tom & Ethel Bradley Foundation**

“This is an awesome program! I am certainly grateful for the opportunity to be a part of something so powerful in terms of its impact on the lives of our young people. There should be more opportunities like this that challenge young people to think, to question, and to grow into mature and responsible and humane adults.”
- **Dr. Darlene V. Willis, president, Concerned Parents Alliance**

“This is simply the most inspiring program I have had the good fortune to be involved with. The quality of the students involved in this program is testimony to the quality of the vision, energy and perspicacity of William and Helen Young. This program is just the kind of gentle push that can make a huge difference in the lives of young people.”
- **Derek Penn, Educator/Researcher, University of California Los Angeles**



TESTIMONIALS



“Mr. Young is an amazingly gifted person who touches the lives of people and changes them forever.” – **Martha Maitchoukow, educator, LA Unified School District**

“William Allen Young is an amazing human being of unparalleled integrity. The Young Center gives our youth unique opportunities to discover their gifts and teaches them how to use them to change the world.” – **Michele Rice, educator, Archdiocese of Los Angeles**

“You have given wings to your passion and in so doing have helped others discover their own wings.” – **Aubrey Chevalier, educator, Long Beach USD**

“The Young Center represents an incredible opportunity for young people to realize their infinite potential to change the world around them. The Young Center takes low-achieving students and inspires and prepares them to achieve greatness in college and beyond. The impact of this organization and its programs on our community is significant.” – **Valerie Morrison, professor, Howard University**

“The Young Center has been transforming the lives and creating opportunities for at-risk youth in our community to achieve success for over 20 years. I’m proud to be a part of an organization that is doing so much to change things for the better in our society.” – **Howard Ransom, Jr., president, New Wave Education Center**

“You really touched and reaffirmed in me the reasons why I continue to believe in this program and its potential to change the world.” – **Dominique Hall-Carr, USC scholar**



TESTIMONIALS



What business & civic leaders are saying

“I wouldn’t be in the position I am today if it had not been for the Young Center and the Youth Think Tank program. – **Alumnus Michael Tubbs, Mayor of Stockton, CA**

“When I look at the young people who come out of the Young Center, I see our next generation of leaders. I see intelligent, thoughtful, and engaged young people who are prepared to go back into their communities and BE the change that is needed.” – **Sandra Evers-Manly, V.P. Corporate Conduct, Northrop Grumman**

“The Young Center Youth Ambassadors represent the future leaders of our nation. They are excellent youth role models for others to emulate.” – **Congresswoman Karen Bass, 37th District**

“Our students at Determined to Succeed have soaked up every bit of knowledge and the incredible experience the California Youth Think Tank has to offer. Thank you SO much.” – **Abby Adams, Exec. Director, Determined to Succeed**

“Our students have come back from CYTT with the best things to say about their experience! I could literally feel the excitement through their words.” – **Angel Honda, Program Director, Determined to Succeed**

“The Young Center is doing so much for so many young people and playing a pivotal role in delivering the next wave of consciousness in America.”
- **Pennie Ruffin, Director, Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission**

“The California Youth Think Tank is a proven asset to any school or youth program working towards the betterment of our youth.”
- **Audree V. Taylor-Jones, Director, Oakland Dept. of Parks and Recreation**

“This was the greatest educational experience my daughters have ever been involved with. They loved it! As a parent, it means so much to see your children excited about learning and being challenged to think and to grow.”
- **Morrium Burgess, Parent Volunteer & Northrop Grumman Corporation**

“It is so encouraging to see so many young people who have come to realize that they are capable and responsible for making a difference in their own communities. Our students have benefited tremendously from their participation in your program.”
- **Patricia Rillera, Executive Director, Young Black Scholars**



TESTIMONIALS



What parents are saying

“Since participating in your program, my daughter Danielle has grown in so many ways. She is more confident, communicates more freely, and has formulated opinions about things she had never given much thought to in the past. She has also become more active in school government and is considering becoming a lawyer.”

- **Patricia Butler, Parent & Volunteer**

I cannot fully express how grateful I am for all that you and your team are doing for our youth. Our son, Austin, is enormously grateful to be a part of such an amazing program! - **Robin Noll (Parent)**

Thank you for an incredible opportunity! Our daughter raved about your program, describing it as a “life changing experience!” Our daughter, Allia, who is a first-generation college student in our family, is now a thriving sophomore at Cal State University Fullerton. Programs like yours are making a huge difference - one family a time. Keep doing it! - **Margarita Ward, parent**

“My son, Anthony Hatten, is a proud alumni of your CYTT 2012 leadership class. Your program emphasizes the importance of education, teamwork, networking, effective communication skills, self-confidence, independence, and so much more. The value you put on education and giving back to the community is unparalleled.” - **Kimberly Hatten, parent**

Our daughter, Sanaa, shared glowing feedback about the CYTT program and her experience with the Young Center. Clearly, it had a positive and meaningful impact on her. We look forward to continuing to support your mission at the Young Center. Your care for our young people extends well beyond this program. - **Jairius & Wakia McClendon, parents**

It is a great program for young boys and girls! We truly appreciate your devotion and passion to our youth. We hope that our son, Ryan, can participate again in this program. - **Michael and Tomoko Uyeki, parents**

“The Young Center has truly been an inspiration to me and my family. I am eternally grateful to you for the impact you have had on our three children, but also the impact your organization has had in our community, our country, and the world.” – **Craig Furness, parent**

“William Young and Helen Young are so inspiring! They have such a huge desire to give back to the community. I don't know how they find the time!” – **Charlotte Griffin, parent, San Diego**



TESTIMONIALS



“Teaching is in William Allen Young’s soul.” – **Zna Houston, Los Angeles**

“William and Helen Young both carry out their passion with so much grace and enthusiasm.” – **Janice & Craig Furness, parents, Irvine**

“Your program had a tremendous impact on my daughter’s success in college. Dominique is an honors graduate of Tuskegee University with a Bachelors degree in Marketing. She was hired by Union Pacific after graduation and is now Regional Sales Manager for PPG Glidden.” – **Gina S. Surgeon, parent, Stockton**

“The Young Center has played a significant role in our daughter’s leadership development and her success as a USC graduate. Your program set the stage and forever changed her world. Thank you again for pushing Chelsea and teaching her how to apply effective learning and leadership models. Your vision is reaching our youth in meaningful ways.” – **Marvin & Rita Foster, parent, Los Angeles**

“Having our daughter participate in your program was one of the best decisions we’ve made as parents. Her thirst for learning and passion for leading others was awakened at the Young Center.” – **Kevin Tucker, parent, Sacramento**

“You changed my son’s life! His confidence level, speaking ability, writing skills, critical thinking, everything has improved. I cannot fully express the gratitude I feel for what you and your organization are doing for our youth. It is so impressive!” – **Nicole Johnson, parent, Los Angeles**

“What you are all doing at the Young Center is priceless. May God bless you all for your dedication and for the positive impact you are having on future leaders of our nation and world.” – **Hussar Kazi, parent, Newbury Park**

“Thank you SOOO much for such a wonderful experience for my son, Darius!” – **Ernesta Johnson, San Diego**

“My daughter said the experience was ‘Transformative.’” – **Sandy Stutman, LA**

“Thank you, Mr. William Allen Young for this incredible opportunity for our children to grow and to gain valuable knowledge. It means so much to them and our entire family.” – **Rachel Borders, Compton**

“You have given my daughter a gift she will hold onto forever” – **Kim Edwards, LA**

“A GREAT experience for young people!” – **Catherine Rubio, Pasadena**



TESTIMONIALS



What student alumni are saying

“I wouldn’t be in the position I am today as a public servant if it had not been for the Young Center and the California Youth Think Tank program. – **Alumnus Michael Tubbs, Mayor of Stockton, CA (2004-2007)**

“Mr. Young is an amazing human being who has inspired an entire generation to be better people and public servants.” – **Bertrand Perdomo-Ucles (2008-10)**

“This program has taught me that I am amazing and that I will success no mater what.” – **Jessica Murdock (2012-13)**

“You have no idea what affect you have had on my life. You pushed me, motivated me, and challenged me to do things I didn’t know were possible.” – **Johnathan Shaw (2010)**

“Today I celebrated 10 years with CYTT. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to the program and the Youngs for the major role they played in getting me to where I am today –on my way to graduate school!” – **Ashleigh Renteria, Hawthorne (2004-2014)**

“Thank you for changing my life and pushing me to make a difference in the lives of others. You have created a ripple affect so profound that it is beginning to change the world.” – **Felipe Hernandez, Paramount (2008-10)**

“Because of the Young Center, I was able to set foot on a college campus for the first time in my life and work with incredible people who all had a passion for public service. That’s what Mr. Young and the entire Young Center staff inspired a first-generation Latino boy to do.” – **Felipe Hernandez, Paramount (2006-08)**

“The Young Center staff inspire you to believe that you can do anything in life. Even if you don’t believe it. Sometimes that’s all we as young people need; someone to believes in us. To hold us accountable.” – **Nicole Boggs, Los Angeles (2005-07)**

“One of the greatest experiences I have ever encountered.” – **Meagan Wooley (2012)**

“Every moment was an important, eye-opening experience!” – **Tahara Sanfield (2012)**

“Thanks for opening the gates to my success.” – **Rosie Hernandez (2012)**

“An amazing program! An unforgettable experience!” – **Brandon Warfield (2013)**

“A transformative experience that inspires personal growth.” – **Maddy Malicdem (2013)**



TESTIMONIALS



“The Young Center is SO valuable. The experience I have gained from this organization and its programs is priceless.” – **Jessica Balasuriya (Class of 2014)**

“I've participated in many youth leadership programs, worked as a lobbyist, authored and passed bills through model legislature in the California Assembly Chambers. But nothing has been as rewarding as the California Youth Think Tank.” – **Alex Johnson (2011-12)**

“What a great experience! The staff was amazing!! My critical thinking skills, public speaking skills, and self confidence improved so much that I enrolled in my first school debate tournament and my team won first place!” – **Andre Moore (2012-13)**

“Thank you very much for accepting me in the program and standing by me when I needed guidance.” – **Zain Kazi (Class of 2013)**

“The past two years of my life have changed significantly since being in the CYTT program. I greatly appreciate the dedication and inspiration you have given to me and others. I will be honored to join the program next year.” – **Amaan Kazi, (Class of 2013-14)**

“An amazing experience! The work you do is so incredible. Thank you for serving my generation.” – **Destiny Novillo, San Pedro, (Class of 2013)**

CYTT was such a positive experience for me! Since participating in the program, I have been inducted into the Math Honor Society and National Honor Society. I scored a 225 on my PSAT, a 2130 on my SAT, and a 31 on my ACT. I have qualified as a National Achievement Semi-Finalist and a National Merit Semi-Finalist for the state of New Jersey.” – **Aziza Khalfani (Class of 2012)**

“You truly touched me and created a foundation for me by providing me with valuable information on leadership and life as a whole. The staff was amazing! Because of the profound impact your program had on me, I have decided to start the first Black Student Union at my high school. Thank you for being the spark to my fire.” – **SaMya Griffin, San Diego (Class of 2013)**

“I was talking with a fellow CYTT member from this past summer, and we both came to the conclusion that this was the best ‘life-changing’ experience we've ever had! This program had a great impact on me, providing me with leadership skills, and helped me realize that I have a voice in this world. Thank you!” – **Ella Johnson (Class of 2013)**

x “Thank you so much for the support you have provided for me over the years. Being a part of CYTT contributed greatly to the person I am today. Next year, I will be serving as Alumni Relations Chair of the African-American Board at Dartmouth University. – **DaVeon S. Smith (Class of 2010-12)**



TESTIMONIALS



“An amazing experience! I cannot thank you enough for the wisdom and self-confidence you have instilled in me. You encouraged me to think outside the box and inspired and pushed me to be the best I can be. You have made an impact on my life that will shape my future forever! - **Madison Zill (2016)**

I can honestly say that CYTT and my tenure as a Young Center Youth Ambassador were the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life! - **Fernando Zamora (2015)**

“By far, the most effective program I have ever been involved with. Without this program I would not have the skills I needed to prepare me for college. The knowledge and inspiration you instilled in me are now mottos that I live by.” - **Sean Lee (2016)**

“I never thought this program would have such a powerful impact on my life! Thank you for giving me the confidence and pushing me to become the person I was always meant to be. Mr. Young, you are the person I want to become when I grow up. Your sincerity and dedication to service inspires me to want to change the world for the better.” - **Cooper Adams (2016)**

Thank you so much for an amazing experience! It was so much fun learning more about social networking and meeting the other youth participants in the program. - **Sophie Lin (CYTT 2016)**

“An amazing and important opportunity for me and others to experience college life for the first time.” - **Nathaly Garcia (2016)**

“An opportunity like this does not fall from the sky like rain. When you get that rain drop, you must savor it as if it might be your last.” - **Brandon Villagomez (2016)**

“An absolutely amazing program! The best experience of my life!” - **Jacque Waters (2013)**

“At first I was shy and afraid to step outside of my comfort zone, but the staff helped me develop self confidence and discover my gift for public speaking. - **Elodia Lunn (2016)**

“Words cannot express how this program has helped to develop my leadership skills and shown me what young people can accomplish when they work together to achieve a common goal.” - **Nicole Follons, (2004-06), graduate, Tuskegee Institute**

“When I returned home after CYTT, everyone around me saw an immediate change in my attitude and behavior. It was like a light had been turned on inside of my head.



TESTIMONIALS



Thank you for the wake up call!" - **Preston Brooks, (2007), graduate, Washington State University**