“The whole experience was transformative for me.”
—BAYLA participant
ABOUT BAYLA

The Bay Area Leadership Academy (BAYLA) is part of the leadership development programming of California Youth Connection, a statewide youth-led advocacy organization that provides a transformative experience for current and former foster youth ages 14-24 who in turn transform the foster care system through targeted legislative and policy advocacy. BAYLA is an integral part of CYC’s overall investment in foster youth leadership.
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INTRODUCTION

WHY
Youth involvement in the development of policy is critical to creating policies that best serve youth and their families. Many policymakers recognize the need to have youth voice in policymaking and often invite youth to participate. However, the experience can leave both youth and policymakers frustrated when neither have the tools to authentically engage with each other. As we work with policymakers to create spaces that allow for youth to genuinely contribute to the policymaking process, we also recognize a need to equip youth with the tools to engage with the spaces as they exist now. We work to ensure that youth currently or formerly in foster care gain a deep and historical analysis of social, economic, and political systems, and the ways that the three systems that impact foster care the most—education, juvenile justice, and mental health—work and intersect with each other.

In the Bay Area Leadership Academy (BAYLA), a 10-week leadership development program for youth currently or formerly in foster care, young leaders ages 18-24 develop professional networks while learning skills and developing their own agendas for effective advocacy for all youth who experience foster care.

WHAT
Youth leaders participate in six day-long training sessions covering topics including:

- Movement Building and Consciousness
- Social, Economic, and Political Change
- Effective Facilitation
- Systems, Institutions, and Power
- Intersectionality
- Communication
- Project Development

Youth are partnered with coaches—professionals working in advocacy—to further explore concepts from the trainings and to plan projects for change. Throughout the program, youth develop relationships with BAYLA facilitators, coaches, staff, guest speakers, and externship hosts. At the end of the training period, youth are placed in four-week externships to implement the projects they have developed.

“Working with Eric was an incredible experience—he made me a better advocate. As a former foster youth and youth leader, his perspective informed our work in ways that made it more successful in impacting youth.”

—BAYLA coach
**STEPS**

1. Youth, coaches, and externship sites are recruited through outreach.
2. Youth apply online.
3. Coaches and externship sites commit to the 10-week program.
4. Youth leaders complete six full days of training.
5. Networking with their coaches, youth leaders plan projects for change.
6. Youth leaders develop their projects for change during their four-week externships.
7. Youth receive $75 for each training they attend, $45 for each assignment they complete and each meeting with their coach, and $15 per hour (up to 10 hours per week) for working on their projects during that phase.
8. Youth leaders build professional skills, develop networks, and create change. Coaches have a network of youth to call on to participate in policy initiatives.
9. Cultural field trips that connect participants with local events and history provide a visual, one-on-one experience.

**MISSION-ALIGNED OPPORTUNITY**

At CYC we utilize a strategy of youth organizing to achieve our mission. With the dual goals of positive youth development and effecting change, we engage current and former foster youth to come together to transform the foster care system.

BAYLA is an opportunity for CYC to:

- Build our membership base by engaging current and former foster youth who have an interest in advocacy work.
- Provide them with political education, skill building, and the opportunity to develop critical understandings and build social capital.
- Grow a network of youth prepared to engage with policymakers in work groups and policy initiatives.
- Connect youth with CYC chapters or other groups of youth leading campaigns for institutional systems change—and who have the information, resources, and opportunities to make social, economic, and political change.
HOW IT WORKS

OUTREACH: Reaching Out Broadly

When conducting outreach for participants we cast the net fairly widely. Although we are generally looking for participants who have had some experience in advocacy—participants ready for their “next step” in advocacy—our only requirement is that participants are within the CYC member age range of 14-24, and we have no firm requirements around previous experience. Participants do not have to have been involved in CYC. However, we do target outreach to places and programs with current and former foster youth who are likely to have had some advocacy experience such as CYC Chapters, campus support programs, and leadership councils and boards.

While we do broad-based outreach, when making the initial contact with youth after they apply, we make the expectations very clear. For example, we note that it is a paid opportunity, and attendance is mandatory.

As we do the outreach, we aim for a cohort of 10. This means we usually accept a few more than 10 since there will likely be a few who are unable to attend. It is important to keep the number as close to 10 as possible since the kind of experience BAYLA is designed for can’t work if the cohort is too big. We want to create an environment in which we can support participants completely.

“BAYLA is trying to get us, just ordinary people who do have a voice that’s not being heard, get heard. To bring out and encourage us to be the leaders that we already are.”

—BAYLA participant
EXPECTATIONS: Creating the Culture of the Cohort

Attendance
As noted above, it’s important to set the expectations from the very first contact. Let youth know what they’re signing up for. Go over the dates, and ensure in advance that they are available for all of them. While it is acceptable to miss one session, more than one absence will result in dismissal from the program. Of course, participants are strongly encouraged to attend ALL sessions. When participants are late, their stipend is reduced for that day. Likewise, if they don’t finish homework or meet with their coach, their stipend is reduced.

Facilitators and/or staff engage with participants between sessions to check in. While these check-ins are primarily about the ideas the youth are developing for their projects, they also provide an opportunity for participants to mention a scheduling conflict that might have come up and get support in strategizing to resolve the conflict.

Community Agreements
Together the cohort comes up with the community agreements, which we review at the start of each session, in addition to checking in. The aim is for BAYLA to be a place where people can bring their whole selves, can freely explore and engage in dialogue. We recognize that people are coming from different experiences and ways of engaging with the world, and we want to recognize all of those.

Ouches, Oops, Big Love

“Ouches, oops, and big love” set the framework for the community agreements. This framework allows the group to engage differences in a safe space, and not avoid or shut down discussions. The goal is to encourage conversations, even those that may be challenging, rather than participants thinking they should not say something because they might get “push-back.” At BAYLA, we have those hard conversations within the safety of the ‘ouches, oops, and big love’ framework. This framework also helps provide a structure to communicate that all of us do need to take responsibility and take care for creating a space that is safe enough to have discussions, and hold each other accountable for the space.

Ouches and Oops
If something someone says comes across in a hurtful way, youth have the opportunity to say ‘Ouch.’ This provides a marker to note that what was said was offensive or hurtful, and gives the speaker the opportunity to say ‘Oops’. These moments are teaching opportunities. Typically, the speaker didn’t mean to say something hurtful, and can clarify what they were trying to say: “I didn’t mean to say something hurtful. What I’m trying to express is ______. Can you please explain to me why my words were painful so I can learn how to say what I mean without hurting someone else?” It’s important to note that in these conversations it is not entirely the responsibility of the person who was hurt to explain it. Others can contribute to the conversation as well.

Big Love
We come from the assumption that people are trying their best and have good intentions. This means we create space for forgiveness when people express things in a way that is hurtful to someone. At the same time, everyone takes responsibility for how they’re expressing things, and learns to do so with care. This is BIG LOVE.
SESSION ONE: Glimpse of the Past, Look to the Future
In this session, we examine self-identity and life experiences as well as historical moments to create a context for the social justice movements we will create in the future. We begin reviewing significant systems that impact youth by looking at the Child Welfare System.

SESSION TWO: What Do You Want to Change?
In this session, we continue our review of significant systems that impact youth by taking a closer look at the Education System and the Juvenile Justice System. Understanding the problem is an important part of making change. Youth leaders learn research strategies and tools to lay the foundation for their project planning.

SESSION THREE: What Kind of Leader Are You?
In this session, we take a deeper look at leadership qualities and discuss the leadership styles that best fit the youth leaders. Youth then learn how to use those tools to share their knowledge and leadership with others. We finish up the review of significant systems by looking at the Mental Health System.

SESSION FOUR: Communication for Change
In this session, we explore strategies and tools to authentically and confidently communicate thoughts and ideas no matter the setting. Through a series of prompts and exercises, youth learn to craft stories, develop content, and pitch their projects in compelling ways that move people to take action.

ALL OF SESSIONS ONE AND TWO, HALF OF SESSION THREE
THE WORLD AS IT IS
While getting to know each other in these opening sessions, we focus on political education: putting things into context, looking at the world as it is now, and connecting the youths’ experiences to these wider realities. We examine the political realities impacting lives (e.g. how the structures of white supremacy play out in the foster care system and other systems impacting youth). The youth connect their own experiences with these larger systems. We complete this “systems overview” in the first three sessions. Because we bring guest speakers in to these sessions we have to work with their schedules so the order of systems overviews is not hard and fast. It is important to complete the systems overviews by session three. However we have learned not to have more than two speakers in one day.

HALF OF SESSION THREE AND ALL OF SESSION FOUR
THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE
We discuss how the world could be if we didn’t have all of the systemic barriers we discussed in sessions one and two. In these sessions we ask: What are you going to do about it? How can you make change happen?
THROUGHOUT THE TRAINING SESSIONS

ENGAGING WITH COACHES

During the training period, participants are expected to meet with their coaches for at least two hours every two weeks, and preferably every week. These meetings are incentivized through the participant stipends. Coaches provide real world context for the concepts covered in the trainings as well as act as sounding boards as participants develop their project ideas. Coaches also become connectors, introducing participants to other professionals and organizations. BAYLA Facilitators send weekly emails to the coaches during the training period to highlight key concepts covered in the trainings and to provide conversation starters to help facilitate the meetings with the participants.

ROLES

BAYLA FACILITATORS

Former BAYLA participants become BAYLA facilitators. Facilitators are responsible for developing and facilitating the six training sessions structured around social justice and creating change through community organizing. They take the lead to develop the agendas and curriculum guide for two of the sessions, identifying learning goals for those sessions, developing a facilitation guide and assigning activities and responsibilities to their co-facilitators for those sessions. For sessions they are not leading, facilitators play roles as assigned by the lead facilitator for that session. Before the training sessions begin, facilitators meet to do high level planning for the sessions and determine who will take lead on which sessions. Facilitators also do follow-up communication with participants and coaches after these sessions.

COACHES

BAYLA coaches are adult volunteers who currently work as advocates in one or more child-serving systems. The role of the coach is to provide a professional advocate’s perspective on the concepts participants learn in the trainings. They do this by meeting with a BAYLA youth leader for at least an average of one hour per week over the duration of BAYLA. These meetings are based on a mutually agreed upon schedule with the participant. Coaches support youth in developing and refining their critical thinking, asking guiding questions as participants are developing their project plans and being a sounding board as they develop their advocacy approach. They provide advice and suggestions to youth participants during the implementation phase of the project. Coaches also commit to supporting youth in professional networking.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Guest speakers are brought in to cover various topics during the training phase. While staff could prepare and present the same material, it is important to bring in outside speakers so the youth leaders connect with more professionals, thereby expanding their network.
SESSIONS FIVE AND SIX: Bringing It All Together and Preparing to Launch

These last two sessions focus on developing and refining project work plans. In session five we hold a ‘pitch session’ during which participants ‘pitch’ their project. If a participant has not yet developed a project they can work on, it becomes clear here. At the same time, the pitching session provides participants an opportunity to put out their ideas, and with input from their peers, refine them into a project.

Former participants, coaches, CYC staff, the program funder and community members are invited to the pitch session, which takes the bulk of the day—the cohort arrives at 10am as usual, with the audience joining at 11am for a welcome/ice breaker followed by the pitch session which lasts until 2pm. The pitch session provides a two-fold result: Youth prepare well-developed ideas and gain practice in talking about them with a small audience. It also provides the program a chance to publicize BAYLA and encourage the broader community to access the BAYLA network when they’re looking for youth to give input on their work.

Another aim of the pitch session is to develop coaches and externship sites. Everyone who attends fills out a feedback sheet about the presentations, and we ask if they think this project can be moved forward, or what needs to be considered for it to move forward. We have lunch together, followed by networking. When the community audience leaves at 2pm, the cohort might take a field trip as they prepare to develop their project plans by incorporating the feedback they’ve just received.

In session six, we ask: What are the next steps? Youth home in on their project plans. Working individually and in small groups, youth build their research into compelling case studies, and finalize targets, goals, and strategies. The six training sessions culminate in participant presentations of their projects on the last day. We also spend at least the last hour and a half closing out the space and doing “plus/delta” evaluations of the training sessions. We spend time as well on appreciations among the participants and awarding certificates of completion.

In session five, youth refine their ideas and practice public speaking by pitching their developing ideas to an audience from the advocacy community. Session six varies dramatically from one cohort to the next, depending on the flow of the rest of the sessions, but is always a continuation of session five.

LAST THREE SESSIONS
WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN THE WIDER WORLD

After session three, we start incorporating field trips, depending on what else is happening in the wider world we’re engaging with. We look for opportunities for build on the learnings we are covering in the sessions such as meetings of local community groups, local exhibits highlighting movements, and organizations hosting events or fundraisers, which we consider in the context of creating resources for the youths’ projects. The aim here is to be creative and connect our engagement with the world back to the bigger learning lessons.
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION/EXTERNSHIPS

The project implementation/externship phase lasts four weeks.

An Example Project and Its Impact

BAYLA participant Erica focused on improving sexual exploitation prevention trainings for foster youth and was hosted by the Center for Young Women’s Freedom. After finishing BAYLA, Erica continued working on this issue with Zero Tolerance, the anti-human trafficking committee of Contra Costa County. She participated in research on programs to support foster youth experiencing commercial sexual exploitation, programs for families with at-risk youth, shelters and housing for exploited youth, and current legislation pertaining to commercially sexually exploited children. This information was so useful to them that they asked Erica to be a part of the Human Trafficking Committee in Contra Costa. Through this committee, Erica continued to further her influence on the community to create awareness and prevention.

EXTERNSHIP HOST SITES

Appropriate BAYLA Externship Host Sites are advocacy-oriented nonprofit organizations that value youth engagement and/or leverage youth voice as a strategy in their advocacy work. The overarching purpose of the collaboration with BAYLA is to share responsibility for preparing youth to undertake such roles. The long-term benefit to host sites and the community is a broader pool of sophisticated youth advocates available to participate in advocacy campaigns and strategies. Externship sites commit to:

- Collaborating with CYC to be matched with a BAYLA youth participant according to mutual interest and suitability of the participant’s project plan.
- Designating an onsite Externship Host, a staff member who will welcome and supervise the BAYLA youth participant and commit to supporting the participant in professional networking and advancing their project goals.
- Hosting and supervising a BAYLA youth participant in an externship for 10 hours per week for 4 weeks, with the externship schedule to be established by the BAYLA youth participant and externship host in advance.
- Identifying agency activities to include in the externship that are compatible with the youth participant’s skills, interests, and project plans, and negotiating the inclusion of those activities with the youth participant.
- Providing a designated workspace and computer, telephone and/or other equipment necessary for youth to both complete their BAYLA externship project and whatever additional responsibilities are negotiated with the externship host.
## TIMELINE

### 2 months before BAYLA
Set training dates, update flyers, update application.
Identify facilitators (former BAYLA participants).
Begin outreach for participants, coaches, guest speakers, and externships.

### 3 weeks before BAYLA
Begin participant engagement, phone calls to applicants with brief interview, review what they’re getting into, communicate info about location and travel.
Facilitators meet to finalize training session goals and assign responsibilities.

### 1 week before BAYLA
Finalize syllabus and other documents (participant expectations, w9s, etc.) for training session one.
Email/phone calls to participants to reconfirm.
Welcome email to coaches.

### COHORT BEGINS

#### After First Training Session
Facilitator debrief and assign duties for upcoming week. *
Homework email to participants. *
Summary email to coaches.*
Externship recruitment for real.

#### After Second Training Session
Save the date for Pitch Session.

#### After Third Training Session
Coordinate opportunities for base building: meetings of local activists; fundraisers; events.

#### After Completion of the Six Training Sessions
Plan a Saturday check-in midway through the externships.

* after each training session
CONCLUSION

Authentically engaging young people in the development of policies that affect them and their families can help ensure that those policies are truly responsive to the needs and strengths of youth and families. While policymakers often bring young people into policymaking meetings so as to include “youth voice” in the process, too often neither they nor the youth are prepared to make the experience as beneficial and productive as it could be if they had the tools to authentically engage with each other. BAYLA builds the leadership of young people while growing their professional network. At the same time, we continue to work with policymakers to create more and better prepared spaces for young people to contribute to the policymaking process.

At the center of BAYLA are the relationships that develop between youth, facilitators, coaches, staff, guest speakers, and externship hosts. The success of the program hinges in large part on developing strong, ongoing connections among advocates—those who have been doing advocacy work for years and the young BAYLA leaders who are prepared to contribute today.

On the Horizon

BAYLA will soon be implementing an evaluation component so we can further refine the program.

We are also planning a reunion of all former cohorts which we envision being like an ongoing “seventh session” but not requiring the same kind of commitment. The evolving idea is that once or twice a year, former cohort members would come back together to get some advanced, personalized training, and get re-inspired to do their advocacy work.

“BAYLA is teaching me leadership qualities that I’ll be able to bring to different aspects in my life whether it be professional or personal. The academy is enabling me to better use my skill set to lead and inspire others and to be inspired by others.”

—BAYLA participant
APPENDIX

COACHING AGREEMENT

FACILITATION GUIDE EXAMPLE

EXTERNSHIP EXPECTATIONS

ONE PAGER

SYLLABUS
# CYC Bay Area Leadership Academy (BAYLA)
## COACHING AGREEMENT

### NAME OF COACH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF COACH</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>CYC Staff Contacts:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christi Ketchum</td>
<td>Kate Teague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Coordinator</td>
<td>Regional Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>404-840-8323</td>
<td>510-688-6639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:christi@calyouthconn.org">christi@calyouthconn.org</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:kate@calyouthconn.org">kate@calyouthconn.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bay Area Leadership Academy is a ten week leadership development program for current and former foster youth under 24 years old. Having foster youth involvement and engagement in policy development is critical to creating policies that best serve youth and their families. BAYLA is designed to help foster youth leaders learn and practice skills and develop professional networks. Youth will participate in 6 one-day training sessions covering topics including effective facilitation; systems, institutions, and power; intersectionality; messaging and communication; and project development. Youth will then be partnered with coaches who are professionals working in advocacy roles. Coaches will support youth in exploring concepts from the trainings and developing projects that further explore their individual interests and can be conducted during an externship placement with a local advocacy organization. This agreement is intended to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of each party.

### Goals and expectations for youth participants are:

1. Actively participate in 6 training sessions and engage with learning concepts presented.
2. Engage with coach to explore learning concepts presented in trainings.
3. Be curious about coach’s approach to advocacy and work style; engage with coach to explore different approaches to advocacy.
4. Develop a project that can be implemented during an externship placement; seek advice from coach on project development.
5. Increased understanding of what it means to be an effective citizen in our community and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

### The coach agrees to:

1. Meet with youth participant for at least an average of one hour per week over the duration of the Leadership Academy; establish meetings with youth participant based on mutually agreed upon schedule.
2. Provide youth participant with a professional advocate’s perspective on the concepts participants learn through the BAYLA trainings.
3. Support youth participants in developing and refining project plans.
4. Provide advice and suggestions to youth participants during implementation phase of project.
5. Support youth participants in developing a professional network.
6. Promptly notify the CYC Staff and youth participant of any challenges.
The youth participant agrees to:
1. Meet with coach for at least an average of one hour per week over the duration of the Leadership Academy; establish meetings with coach based on mutually agreed upon schedule.
2. Be prepared for meetings with coach with questions from trainings and/or about project development.
3. Promptly notify the CYC Staff and coach of any challenges.

CYC Staff agrees to:
1. Provide youth participants with an orientation to the expectations of BAYLA.
2. Provide coaches and youth participants with a summary of concepts from each week's training and some conversation starters.
3. Provide on-going follow-up and support to both youth participants and coaches.

________________________________________________ _____________________
BAYLA Coach  (signature)       Date

________________________________________________ _____________________
CYC Staff  (signature)       Date
Bay Area Leadership Academy  
Saturday, October 21, 2017  
Session Facilitation Guide

Homework Review—Miguel  
10:15am-10:45am
- Community Agreements
- Split everyone into pairs.
- Have them pull out their SMART goals they did for homework.
- Pass out sheet titled “Work Plan.” Instruct them that they will be editing their goals and once they are finalized, they can transfer them to this sheet.
- Instruct them to share their SMART goals with their partner and have their partner provide feedback: Is the goal Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely? What can you do to make your goal a SMART goal?

Workplan—Miriam  
10:45am–11:45am
- Pass out sheet titled “Action Plan Template.”
- Goal: This sheet is going to provide steps so that participants can accomplish their SMART goals.
- Go over example.
- Have participants complete sheet individually based off of their SMART goals.
- When they are done, have participants share their work plan with a partner.

Energizer—Susan  
11:45am–12:00pm
- Externship Expectations  
  Emphasize learning experience—sponge (learning networking: go in with an open mind).
  Three things you want to get out of your externship—write down on sheet.

Roadmap—Miriam  
12:15pm-12:30pm
- Have everyone complete their roadmaps if they haven’t done so.
- If their roadmap is completed, have them do research on the computer regarding their project.
- Kate will distribute externship sites during this period

Lunch  
12:30pm–1:00pm

Presentation on Juvenile Justice—Henrissa  
1:00pm–2:30pm

Energizer—Miguel  
2:30pm–2:45pm

Debrief—Susan  
2:45pm–3:15pm
- Split everyone into groups (3 people in each group).
- Ask them to answer: What is the connection between the child welfare system and juvenile justice system?
- Ask them to answer: How do different groups of people experience the juvenile justice system? (Ex. people of color, women, men, youth, etc.)
4. Instruct them to come up with a skit on how they envision an ideal justice system.
5. Have each group perform their skit for everyone. (Kate!)

**Field Trip: Occupy Oakland—Strike Debt Bay Area meeting**

3:15pm–4:00pm

**Checkout/Homework & Evaluations**

4:00pm–4:55pm

**Closing Circle—Susan**

1. Have everyone get in a circle. (We can stand or sit.)
2. Take ball of yarn and instruct participants to say: What’s one thing you learned that you’d like to take with you to your externship and acknowledge/appreciate someone in the circle who hasn’t been appreciated before.
3. Give an example and throw the yarn to someone in the circle.
4. Make sure you hold on to the yarn.

**Distribute Certificates—Miguel**

**Evaluations**

**Movement Video**

4:55pm–5:00pm

**Printing List:**

- Action Plan Template
- Work Plan Sheet
- Externship Expectations Sheet
- Agenda
- Facilitation Guides
EXTERNSHIP EXPECTATIONS

- Meet with Kate in person two times throughout externship.
- Payment: $15/hr up to 10 hours per week.
- Complete your timesheets and submit them to Kate every Monday by 12pm.
- If you run into a problem, make sure to contact Kate as soon as possible!
- This is a learning experience.
- Problems may arise: This is okay, do your best!
- Take the opportunity to learn all you can and participate as much as you can.
- List three things you would like to get out of your externship experience:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________
BAY AREA
LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY

The Bay Area Leadership Academy is a 10 week leadership development program for foster youth leaders 18–24 years old. Having youth involvement and engagement in policy development is critical to creating policies that best serve youth and their families. The Bay Area Leadership Academy is the place for foster youth leaders to learn skills, practice and develop the professional networks to be effective advocates for themselves and for other foster youth.

Foster youth leaders will participate in 6 day long training sessions covering topics including:
- Effective Facilitation
- Systems
- Institutions and Power
- Intersectionality
- Messaging
- Communication
- Project Development

Youth will be partnered with coaches, professionals working in advocacy, to explore concepts from the trainings and begin to develop projects for change. At the end of training, leaders will be placed at local organizations for a 4 week externship to implement a project they have developed.

Current and former foster youth, 18–24 years old interested in participating in the Bay Area Leadership Academy can apply online at: http://svy.mk/1RH1xy8. Foster youth leaders have the opportunity to earn up to $1200 for their participation.

Professionals interested in partnering with a youth leader as a coach and Organizations wishing to host a youth leader at their agency for an externship can contact Kate Teague or Christi Ketchum at the CYC Statewide Office.

Kate Teague
Regional Coordinator
kate@calyouthconn.org
510-688-6639

Christi Ketchum
Regional Coordinator
christi@calyouthconn.org
404-840-8333

California Youth Connection
1611 Telegraph Ave, Ste 1100, Oakland, CA 94612
www.calyouthconn.org
Description and Objectives:
The Bay Area Leadership Academy is a 10 week leadership development program for foster youth leaders. Having youth involvement and engagement in policy development is critical to creating policies that best serve youth and their families. BAYLA is the place for foster youth leaders to learn skills, practice and develop the professional networks to be effective advocates for themselves and other foster youth. The first 6 weeks of BAYLA will focus on learning and building a project plan. During this time participants will meet regularly with a coach who is a professional advocate to examine concepts discussed in trainings as well as focus on developing professional connections in their area of interest. The last 4 weeks of BAYLA, participants will be hosted by a community organization and be responsible for implementing an advocacy project that will improve the lives of foster youth.

Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attend All Saturday Trainings</th>
<th>Meet Regularly With Your Coach</th>
<th>Document Your Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Trainings will take place on Saturdays from 10:00am–5:00pm at the CYC Statewide Office (1611 Telegraph Ave., Suite 1100, Oakland).</td>
<td>• You are expected to meet with your coach for at least 1 hour per week to discuss your learnings from the trainings and discuss project ideas.</td>
<td>• During the training phase of BAYLA you will be developing a work plan for your project. Write it down to share your plan with your coach and your host site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be prepared by completing all assignments and being ready to participate in discussions.</td>
<td>• Be open to feedback and suggestions from your coach. Keep in mind you are building your professional network.</td>
<td>• During the project phase of BAYLA you are expected to spend about 10 hours per week implementing your project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payment Schedule:
If you are on time, you will receive $75 for each training you attend.

By completing assignments and meeting with your coach, you will receive $45.

During the project phase, you will earn $15/hr up to 10 hours/week.

Checks will be issued every 2 weeks.

Training dates: 8/20; 8/27; 9/10; 9/17; 9/24; 10/1
Project phase: 10/3-10/29
## Training Outline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session One</th>
<th>Session Two</th>
<th>Session Three</th>
<th>Session Four</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Glimpse of the Past, Look to the Future</strong></td>
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<td><strong>What Kind of Leader Are You?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communication for Change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this session, we will be examining self-identity and life experiences as well as looking at historical moments in movements to create a context for the social justice movements we will create in the future. We will start our review of significant systems that impact youth by looking at the Child Welfare System.</td>
<td>In this session, we will continue our review of significant systems that impact youth by taking a closer look at the Education System and the Juvenile Justice System. Knowing what’s the problem is an important part of making change, you’ll learn research strategies and tools to lay the foundation for your project planning.</td>
<td>In this session, we will take a deeper look at leadership qualities, what type of leadership styles fit you best and how to use those tools to share your knowledge and leadership with other individuals. We will finish up the review of significant systems by looking at the Mental Health System.</td>
<td>In this session, we’ll explore strategies and tools to authentically and confidently communicate your thoughts and ideas no matter the setting. Through a series of prompts and exercises, you’ll learn to craft stories, develop content and pitch your project in compelling ways that move people to take action.</td>
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### Session Five and Session Six

These sessions will focus on developing and refining work plans for projects. Working individually and in small groups, we will build our research into compelling case studies, and be finalizing targets, goals and strategies. Our training sessions will culminate in participant presentations of their projects.

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**Guest Presenters:**

**Geordee Mae Corpuz, Lead Organizer, Californians for Justice**  
Geordee is responsible for developing the leadership abilities and organizing skills of the students at Oakland High and Oakland Tech. She was born and raised in the Bay Area, and graduated from UC Davis with a Bachelor’s Degree in Asian American Studies and a minor in Communications. She is highly involved in several youth organizations all over Northern California, and is also apart of the UC Davis Asian Pacific American Alumni Association. **Californians for Justice** is a statewide grassroots organization working for racial justice by building the power of youth, communities of color, immigrants, low income families and LGBTQ communities. Led by students, we organize to advance educational justice and improve our social, economic and political conditions.

**Robin Allen, Interim Executive Director, California Youth Connection**  
Robin has spent most of her 25-year nonprofit management career working on issues impacting the lives of California’s foster youth. Most recently Robin served for 13 years as the Executive Director of California CASA managing significant statewide growth and impact of the CASA community during her tenure. **California CASA** works to strengthen California’s network of local CASA programs by providing technical assistance and advocating for progressive child welfare policy and practice. Their ultimate goal is to ensure children in the foster care system have both a voice and the services they need for a stable future. **California Youth Connection** is a youth led organization that develops leaders who empower each other and their community to transform the foster care system through legislative, policy and practice change.

**Annabelle Gardner, Director of Communication, Young Minds Advocacy**  
Annabelle is a graduate of the University of Oregon’s International Studies program, with a focus on human rights and Latin American Studies. During college and after, she spent time working in several countries in South America. Her experiences solidified Annabelle’s interest in pursuing a career in advocacy with, and on behalf of, people with limited power and voice. Annabelle started at YMAP in December 2012, where she builds on her past experiences in community organizing and communications to inform, engage and empower youth mental health stakeholders. **Young Minds Advocacy** is an organization founded to address the number one health issue facing young people and their families—unmet mental health needs. Using a blend of policy research and advocacy, impact litigation, and strategic communications, we work to change attitudes towards mental illness and break down barriers to quality mental healthcare for young people and their families.
“I became a BAYLA coach because I believe in young people’s ability to effect change in their communities. I was in a unique position to volunteer and give back to California Youth Connection, an organization that developed my skills and networks when I was a member. I wanted to support youth participants in the same way and build connections. BAYLA provided me the opportunity to connect directly with a young person outside of my daily work environment. I looked forward to my weekly check-ins. I was able to develop my coaching skills and grow professionally through the process. I began to think more deeply about systems change and how foster youth can play greater roles in local organizations and in decision-making.”

—BAYLA coach