



## 2017 YLA Application Form

*Deadline: Must be received at the YLA office by Friday, March 17, 2017.*

### About the YLA

The YLA is a unique program providing a constructive, mentoring environment for students from low-income backgrounds who are statistically less likely to attend college than their non low-income peers. We offer leadership training sessions two Saturdays per month during the academic year to our cadets (7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) from across the Elgin Community College (ECC) District 509, which includes Illinois school districts U-46, D300, D301, and D303. In addition, we offer free academic skills coaching, Service-Learning project experience, field trips and many volunteer opportunities to participate in community events. At the conclusion of their six years with YLA, if they are in good academic standing when they graduate from high school and they are still residing within ECC District 509, cadets will be awarded a full tuition scholarship to attend Elgin Community College for two consecutive years to complete an associate's degree (they need to maintain grade requirements). Further, YLA graduates may qualify an additional full tuition scholarship at Judson University for up to three additional years to complete a bachelor's degree after completing an associate's degree at ECC (or another institution). The motto for YLA is: "I AM on the path to success. I AM college bound." To learn more about the YLA, visit [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org).

### Who is eligible to apply? How many students are selected each year?

Only current 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who reside within Elgin Community College District 509 (which includes the geographical boundaries for IL School Districts U-46, D300, D301 and D303) are eligible for free or reduced lunch may apply. We require a copy of the family's 1040 tax forms from calendar year 2016 to be attached to this application. **Important note: This application process is competitive. Because of this, late applications are strictly not accepted.** On average, over 100 applications are received each year of which approximately 50 are offered a family interview (interview date is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 22) and up to 25 student finalists will be selected shortly after to be YLA cadets.

All completed applications can be mailed or hand-delivered to: Youth Leadership Academy (YLA), 410 Renner Drive, Elgin, IL 60123. The YLA office is located in Building K, Room 109 of Elgin Community College (ECC). For questions regarding the YLA or your application, please call 847-214-6965 or 847-214-6910. The YLA office is open Monday – Friday from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm (open until 5:00 pm on March 17, 2017 only). You may also direct questions via e-mail to [YLAAdmin@elgin.edu](mailto:YLAAdmin@elgin.edu). **NO part of the YLA Application may be faxed.** Applications may be scanned and emailed to [YLAAdmin@elgin.edu](mailto:YLAAdmin@elgin.edu) before 11:59 pm on March 17, although the YLA will require all original documents.

## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**This list is printed here to help you organize all your documents. The most common reason some applicants are not selected is because they have incomplete applications! It is the applicant's family's responsibility (not YLA's, not the teacher's, not the principal's) to obtain and submit all required documentation in order to complete the application. (Do not turn in this page.)**

**Applicants must have all of the items listed below before turning in your application:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. SECTION I – completed Student Information
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. SECTION II – Student Questions (separate handwritten paper needs to be attached)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Completed recommendation form from the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Completed recommendation form from the school principal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Completed recommendation form from an adult who knows the applicant. (Not a parent or relative of the applicant.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Copy of school documentation verifying that the applicant receives either free or reduced lunch
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. SECTION IV – completed Applicant and Parent Agreement
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Family's completed 1040 tax form from 2016 (at least the first two pages)  
*If 2016 tax documents are not available, the family may submit documents from 2015, however, will be asked to turn in 2016 documents no later than April 1.*

**INCOMPLETE AND/OR LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

**Remember, applications may NOT be faxed.**

# SECTION I: STUDENT INFORMATION

PLEASE PRINT NEATLY

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First)

Date of birth: (month, day, year) \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please know that YLA Scholarships are not able to be awarded to students who do not share this information. All students' social security numbers are kept in a confidential database accessible only to YLA and ECC staff.)*

Home Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone where student can be reached (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate telephone number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Current School Name \_\_\_\_\_

District: (check one) \_\_\_\_\_ U-46                      Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
   \_\_\_\_\_ D300    *(District assigned number)*  
   \_\_\_\_\_ D301  
   \_\_\_\_\_ D303

Do you receive free or reduced lunch? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If yes, please attach copy of school district letter confirming this)*

Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_ (Must be in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to be eligible to apply.)

School where you will begin 7<sup>th</sup> grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ female                      \_\_\_\_\_ male

Student's ethnic background (please check as many as are applicable):  
*Note: answering this question is optional. This question complies with the U.S. Dept. of Education's standards for ethnic and racial data collection.*

- Caucasian / White \_\_\_\_\_
- Hispanic / Latino/a \_\_\_\_\_
- African American / Black \_\_\_\_\_
- Asian American \_\_\_\_\_
- American Indian or Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_
- Middle Eastern \_\_\_\_\_

Is the student bilingual? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes, is the student fluent in Spanish? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If no, please share second language: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the student have a sibling or relative who is a cadet in the Youth Leadership Academy?

\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ yes

If yes, please share the name of the YLA cadet: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the student applicant a citizen or legal resident of the United States? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

**MOTHER's / Legal Guardian's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If same as student, write "same")*

City, state and zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If same as student, write "same")*

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**FATHER's / Legal Guardian's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If same as student, write "same")*

City, state and zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*(If same as student, write "same")*

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II: Student questions

The purpose of these student questions is for the YLA to get to know the student applicant. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions.

Please have the student applicant answer each of the following questions or writing prompts on a separate piece of paper. Please print or write neatly. No typed answers will be accepted.

1. What would you say is your greatest talent? Describe this talent. Where did it come from? How do you use it? Do you enjoy using it? Why or why not?
2. Who is an adult (other than a parent) who you admire and why?
3. What do you imagine college will be like?
4. Why do you want to be a YLA cadet?
5. **ESSAY:** Spend at least 30 minutes interviewing someone who has been to college. What was college actually like for him or her? How does his or her answer compare with your answer to question #3 above? What advice did he or she give you about how to best prepare for college? Did this interview make you more excited or less excited for college? Why? *(This essay must be at least 100 words total but no more than 200 words total.)*

**Helpful tip:** Write a draft of your answers before this application deadline (March 17), then ask someone (like your teacher) to help you edit it. Triple check it for spelling and grammar then re-write your answers neatly on a final sheet of paper to turn in with this application. Remember, no typed answers will be accepted.

**Video option:** Instead of writing answers to the questions above, student applicants may create a short video (no more than 10 minutes long total) of themselves answering and explaining their responses. The video must be submitted on a flash drive and attached to this application. The name of the video file must include the first and last name of the student applicant. Flash drives need to be clearly marked and they will not be returned to the applicant. All standard video files are acceptable with the exception of all iPhone videos.

## Section III: RECOMMENDATIONS

Three recommendations are required in order for the student application to be complete:

1. One recommendation **must** come from the student's CURRENT 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teacher.
2. One recommendation **must** come from the student's school principal or school administrator.
3. One recommendation **must** come from another adult member of the community who knows the student outside of school (*recommendations from family members or relatives are not accepted*).

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Each adult recommending the student **must** use the YLA Recommendation Form included in this application. A separate letter of recommendation may be attached, but it cannot replace the YLA Recommendation Form.
- It is the **student's responsibility** to share the YLA Recommendation Form with the adults who will fill them out in a timely manner (in other words, the day before the deadline is not considerate).

\*\*\* Please make sure that you give the right recommendation form to the right person! For example, the school principal should not be using the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher recommendation form.

### NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Youth Leadership Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded to students at the Academy. It does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

## SECTION IV: APPLICANT & PARENT AGREEMENT

### Student's Commitment:

If I am selected for this program, I agree that I will:

- not participate in gang activities
- not use any drugs or alcohol
- stay out of trouble at school
- not participate in any illegal activity in my community
- attend school regularly
- apply myself to my best of my academic ability to maintain the YLA 2.0 gpa minimum requirement
- ask for tutoring help if I need it with any subject at school I will ask for it
- participate in YLA activities and remain committed for the entire length of the YLA program (7th through 12th grade)
- follow YLA dress code and attendance policy (you can read these on YLA's web site)
- follow YLA's Code of Respect which reads as follows:

**We respect ourselves and other and treat each other with common courtesy. We respect our diversity– in respect to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, physical and mental abilities, class, age and opinion. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind in our community. We take pride in our academic work and contribute actively in the classroom and our learning community. We are respectful of our environment and take pride in it. We participate in our community through attending and volunteering. We look out for our fellow cadets both and off campus. We trust ourselves and each other to abide by the policies and expectations of the Youth Leadership Academy. We speak up about important issues because each voice does make a difference.**

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Parent / Legal Guardian Commitment:**

Please read each item below and **check or initial next to each statement** to indicate that you understand it and agree to it.

\_\_\_\_\_ If my/our child is selected for this program, I/we agree that I/we will support him/her in meeting all the requirements of the Academy, including staying out of gangs, not consuming drugs nor alcohol, and getting the best grades they can in school. I/we understand that if my child does become involved in gangs, drugs, alcohol or any form of illegal activity, my child will be dropped from the YLA program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we also understand that we will be required to attend a certain number of YLA Parent Meetings each year in order for my child to stay in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we understand that my child must be a legal resident of the U.S. to be eligible to receive the YLA Scholarship at ECC upon completion of the YLA program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we also understand that the YLA primarily serves youth from low-income families, and thus I/we are **attaching a copy of at least the first two pages of our family's most recent (2016) federal 1040 form which lists the student applicant as a dependent**. By submitting this form, I/we also are disclosing that I/we do not receive any additional non-reported income.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we also understand that we must reside in Elgin Community College District 509 to be eligible for this program and its benefits. This geographical area includes Illinois School Districts U-46, D300, D301 and D303. This also means that if we move outside of this ECC District 509, we will alert the YLA as soon as possible.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we understand that if, during any time while my child is in the YLA program, his or her academic grades fall below minimum standards (2.0 GPA) after two consecutive progress reports and he/she does not participate in academic tutoring support programs, my child may be dropped from the YLA program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we understand that the YLA has a dress code and thus will ensure that my child will be dressed appropriately for each YLA activity.

\_\_\_\_\_ I/we understand that the YLA has an attendance policy that requires my child be present for approximately 20 Saturday mornings (9:00 am – 12:00 pm) as scheduled each year. This means I will secure transportation to and from Elgin Community College for my child in order that he/she may participate in YLA.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, all the information in this application form is correct. I understand that any falsified information will result in automatic disqualification of the student applicant.

Parent / Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

A Not-For-Profit 501 c 3 Corporation

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Recommendation Form

### Introduction for Recommender:

Congratulations! One of your students is applying to become a cadet in the Youth Leadership Academy, an organization working with low-income youth in Illinois School Districts U-46, D300, D301 and D303 on their journeys toward college. To learn more about the YLA, visit [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org). Your recommendation is helpful to the YLA Selection Committee who will do its best to select applicants who could benefit most from what the YLA has to offer. Selection into the YLA each year is a competitive process. Some applicants will be invited to interview with the YLA Selection Committee along with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Then, approximately 25 finalists will be asked to make a 6 year commitment to be active in the YLA program. If you have any questions about this application, please contact us at 847-214-6965 or 6910. Thank you!

### Please Print Neatly:

Name of the student \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender's title: \_\_\_\_\_ School / Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (where we can best reach you daytime or evening): (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a family member or relative of the student applicant? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

**Please answer the following questions on this sheet of paper to the best of your ability. Please print or write neatly.**

1. Please describe this student's strongest quality?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Please describe this student's strongest need or area for improvement?

(continued)

3. What do you know about this student's life outside of school that would make him or her a prime candidate for an organization like the YLA which offers extra mentoring support to students and their parents?
  
4. Please describe the student's leadership potential, including overall levels of effort and motivation:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What would be your primary piece of advice for a mentor who would get to work with this student next year?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What else would you like to share about this student that would convince the YLA to select him or her to be a YLA cadet?

**Lastly, and most importantly, please mark ONE of the following:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I highly recommend this student with enthusiasm.

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend this student.

\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend this student with some reservations. Please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not recommend this student. Please explain:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this YLA Recommendation Form to us **no later than March 17, 2017:**

- Mail to the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) at 410 Renner Drive, Elgin, IL 60123, or
- Scan and attach via email to **YLAAdmin@elgin.edu** no later than 11:59 pm on March 17.
- This recommendation form may NOT be faxed.



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## School Principal Recommendation Form

### Introduction for Recommender:

Congratulations! One of your students is applying to become a cadet in the Youth Leadership Academy, an organization working with low-income youth in Illinois School Districts U-46, D300, D301 and D303 on their journeys toward college. To learn more about the YLA, visit [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org). Your recommendation is helpful to the YLA Selection Committee who will do its best to select applicants who could benefit most from what the YLA has to offer. Selection into the YLA each year is a competitive process. Some applicants will be invited to interview with the YLA Selection Committee along with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Then, approximately 25 finalists will be asked to make a 6 year commitment to be active in the YLA program. If you have any questions about this application, please feel free to contact us at 847-214-6965 or 6910. Thank you!

### Please Print Neatly:

Name of the student \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender's title: \_\_\_\_\_ School / Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (where we can best reach you daytime or evening): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a family member or relative of the student applicant? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

**Please answer the following questions on this sheet of paper to the best of your ability. Please print or write neatly.**

1. Do you know this student well or not well? Please describe your answer.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Please tell us about this students' leadership potential. Give details.

*(continued)*

3. How has this student progressed academically over the last several years?
  
4. What do you know about this student's life outside of school that would make him or her a prime candidate for an organization like the YLA which offers extra mentoring support to students and their parents?
  
5. What kind of support do you believe this student will require in junior high in order to stay in good academic and behavioral standing?
  
6. This student qualifies for the following:  
 Free lunch     Reduced lunch     Neither free nor reduced lunch
  
7. What else would you like to share about this student that would convince the YLA to select him or her to be a YLA cadet?

**Lastly, and most importantly, please mark ONE of the following:**

- I highly recommend this student with enthusiasm.
- I recommend this student.
- I recommend this student with some reservations. Please explain:
- I do not recommend this student. Please explain:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this YLA Recommendation Form to us **no later than March 17, 2017:**

- Mail to the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) at 410 Renner Drive, Elgin, IL 60123, or
- Scan and attach via email to **YLAAdmin@elgin.edu** no later than 11:59 pm on March 17.
- This recommendation form may NOT be faxed.



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## Adult Member of the Community Recommendation

### Introduction for Recommender:

Congratulations! The student who invited you to fill this form out is applying to become a cadet in the Youth Leadership Academy, an organization working with low-income youth in Illinois School Districts U-46, D300, D301 and D303 on their journeys toward college. To learn more about the YLA, visit [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org). Your recommendation is helpful to the YLA Selection Committee who will do its best to select applicants who could benefit most from what the YLA has to offer. Selection into the YLA each year is a competitive process. Some applicants will be invited to interview with the YLA Selection Committee along with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Then, approximately 25 finalists will be asked to make a 6 year commitment to be active in the YLA program. If you have any questions about this application, please feel free to contact us at 847-214-6965 or 6910. Thank you!

### Please Print Neatly:

Name of the student \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommender's title: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (where we can best reach you daytime or evening): (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a family member or relative of the student applicant? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

**Please answer the following questions on this sheet of paper to the best of your ability.  
Please print or write neatly.**

1. How long have you known this student and in what capacity?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Please tell us about this student's leadership potential. Give details.

(continued)

