

**AACCS**American Association
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Educate for Eternity.

15th Annual Youth Legislative Training Conference – 2009

The AACCS 15th Annual Youth Legislative Training Conference was held July 14-18, 2009, and gave students from Christian schools across the nation a “hands-on” experience of the workings of Washington, DC. The report below from the AACCS Legislative Office highlights the events of the week.

With events like this year’s Youth Legislative Training Conference (YLTC) it is hard to forget that God is good. For the 15th year in a row, God has truly blessed in our efforts to inspire a generation to make a difference for the Kingdom of God within the realm of government.

The week commenced on Tuesday with registration and formalities before Congressional expert Mrs. Gail Nicholas went to town, teaching the students about the legislative process in preparation for the week-long highlight of the mock senate. This mock senate included each student role–playing high ranking Senators as they crafted and debated legislation directed towards solving the current economic crunch in America. Although not all bills and resolutions were germane to the economy (“Jim DeMint” proposed an amendment that would force Senate Majority Leader “Harry Reid” to go on a diet), the students proposed and passed several bills that would have a positive impact on America. As debate subsided on Friday, all were excited at what they had accomplished, and who knows -- someday, we could see a few students standing for what they believe on the actual floor of Congress. With all considered, I would actually be surprised if we did not.

Although the mock Senate ran all week, there were certainly other events of equal excitement. The week’s activities outside of the mock Senate included a Congressional briefing in the U.S. Capitol in which five Representatives and one Senator addressed the students. Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-6th), Rep. Mike Pence (IN-6th), Rep. Rob Bishop (UT-1st), Rep. Jim Jordan (OH-4th), Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC-5th), and Sen. Jim DeMint (SC) inspired the students through their personal experiences and knowledge of current political issues. Most refreshing, though, was that they unashamedly communicated the fact that their faith is always first in their lives. Later that day the students were addressed by Rep. Michelle Bachmann (MN-6th) before receiving a private tour of the U.S. Capitol by Rep. Randy Forbes (VA-4th). Both Bachmann and Forbes are ardent defendants of Christian liberties and they, too, conveyed the prominence of their personal faith very effectively.

Other special speakers throughout the week included AACCS President, Dr. Keith Wiebe on “Leaders of Tomorrow,” Chuck Nicholas on “Public Speaking and Debate,” Sarah Griffith on “Internships,” Chis Stio on “The Nature of Politics,” former White House Liaison, Tim Goeglein on “Faith in Politics,” Federal Tax Judge, David Gustafson on “The Role of the Judiciary,” Ned Ryun on “Grassroots Political Involvement,” and Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX-1st) on “The Faith of our Founding

Fathers.” The President of Concerned Women for America, Wendy Wright, also spoke to the students about “Serving God Over Man” at the Friday banquet.

A very special feature of this and every YLTC is that the students had an immediate opportunity to become politically active on Capitol Hill. Every student was able to represent thousands of Christians as they hand-delivered letters to the offices of Senators on behalf of AACS, Focus on the Family Action, the American Family Association of PA, and Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays. Each organization’s letter was slightly different but opposed either hate crimes or the Supreme Court nomination of Sonia Sotomayor. It was truly the Providence of God that allowed the height of controversy surrounding these issues to fall on the same week that the YLTC students were able to have a first-hand impact on the debate.

Needless to say, the week was jam-packed, and it is somewhat hard to imagine that the students also had time to meet their Congressmen, tour the Capitol, tour one of the Smithsonian museums, tour the monuments, see a Marine Barracks Parade, and participate in a scavenger photo shoot on Capitol Hill while still having time to eat, sleep, and have daily devotions.

The week’s activities ended at Arlington National Cemetery where four students were awarded the opportunity to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on behalf of AACS. After saying their final goodbyes, the exhausted yet inspired students then went their separate ways, deeply appreciative for what God had done at the 2009 Youth Legislative Training Conference.

This article was written by Jonathan Haggard, AACS Intern and YLTC 2007 alumnus. Jonathan is currently a Junior at Pensacola Christian College, pursuing a degree in Prelaw. He plans to attend law school and dedicate his life to public service, the promotion of conservative values, and the defense of Christian liberties.

*Special thanks go out to all of our generous donors that made this remarkable event possible and allowed all forty students to come to Washington, D.C. on a full scholarship. A special thanks to our corporate sponsor, the [Worthwhile Company](#), for their generous support in this cause. If you would like to invest in the training of our future leaders through the Youth Legislative Training Conference, please [Click Here](#).