



AACS Youth Legislative Development Conference—2026

From July 6-10, 2026, the AACCS hosted the 32nd annual Youth Legislative Development Conference in Washington, D.C. This year, 40 high school students from 18 states made lifelong friends, learned the legislative process, and developed leadership skills, all filtered through a Christian worldview. The week included a week-long mock senate, special briefings, and tours of our nation's historic Capital. Students wrote, discussed, debated, and passed their own bills as they role-played current U.S. senators. Mrs. Gail Nicholas, a Six-Diamond coach in the National Speech and Debate Association, ran the mock senate.

During the "Day on the Hill," the YLDC students attended a congressional briefing, featuring staff from the offices of congressional leaders like Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (LA) and Rep. Brandon Gill (TX), among others. The staffers discussed how their faith influences their politics. Later, students visited congressional offices to share their appreciation for Christian education and to advocate for religious liberty protections in the Education Freedom Tax Credit.

Students also visited the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex for an administration briefing. Officials from the Department of Education, Office of Public Liaison, Office of Legislative Affairs, Domestic Policy Council, Freedom 250, and Office of Communications spoke about the work of the administration and took student questions.

Throughout the week, the students heard from several other speakers. Dr. Matthew Spalding from Hillsdale College in D.C. delivered a lecture on the Declaration of Independence and its story. Timothy Goeglein, vice president of external and governmental relations at Focus on the Family, spoke about the importance of active Christian influence in America. Ryan Brann, director of communications training at the Leadership Institute, trained students on public speaking. During the staffer panel, YLDC alumni Peter Holland and Luke Ball, along with AACCS friend Worth Loving, spoke on how the YLDC gave them a vision for politics as a ministry.

Other highlights of the week included a tour of the Capitol with a special visit to the Speaker's Balcony and Chapel, as well as an evening tour of the Jefferson, Lincoln, Vietnam War, and Korean War memorials on the National Mall, led by Tim Schmig. The students also attended the Great American State Fair. The week concluded with a visit to Arlington National Cemetery, where four exemplary students received the privilege to represent the AACCS with the ceremonial wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The AACCS is grateful for an incredible week and prays for God's blessing and guidance for the students. The AACCS thanks the volunteers, donors, and chaperones who made this year's YLDC a success. For pictures of the week, please visit our [Facebook page \(@AACCSeducates\)](#) or our [YLDC Instagram account \(@ylde_aacs\)](#).