

New York State YMCA Youth & Government 2018 - 2019 OFFICER NOMINATION

I declare my candidacy for the position of:

Public Defender

Name: **Fiona Connolly**

Year in school: 10

Number of years in YAG: 2

Previous Youth and Government experience and/or other qualifications:

In my first year of Youth and Government, I argued case C. It is currently my second year in youth and government, and this year I have had the privilege to serve as a justice.

Outside of Youth and Government, I am on my school's Campus Ministry Board (a club that helps provide for local disadvantaged families), on my school's varsity crew team, and I play the piano.

How has the time you've spent in youth and government affected your life?

The debates held at our local meetings have lead me to reflect upon the pros and cons of laws and how they protect or fail to protect the rights of our citizens. Being cognizant of the flaws of our legal system has motivated me to get the most out of my Youth and Government experience in order to prepare me to someday make a difference in the real world. In addition to this I have been able to connect with other students across New York, who also strive to be the change we hope to see in our country. The program has also helped me in developing crucial skills such as public speaking and leadership.

What inspired you to take on a leadership position in the judicial branch?

After becoming increasingly involved in the program over the past two years I have developed a passion for the protection of people's rights. Serving as the public defender would provide me with an opportunity to practice this in hopes of eventually pursuing a career in law.

Explain how you would lead the judicial branch using servant leadership if elected to office:

If elected, I plan to become more involved as a servant leader by helping all of the attorneys prepare for their cases. Although it is easy to mistake Youth and Government as a sort of competition whether it is to win your case or pass a bill, I think the most important role of the program is for students to come together and help each other develop our skills to one day contribute to society. I would want to increase servant leadership not only by helping attorneys learn lifelong skills in debate, but also by encouraging attorneys to help each other. Helping everyone fulfill their potential will help us achieve more for the greater good.

