

New York State Youth and Government Officer Application

Speaker of Assembly Liberty

Alexis Ahn

Years in Youth and Government: 1

Previous Youth and Government experience and/or other qualifications:

My Youth and Government career started just last year. As a wide-eyed sophomore constantly looking for things to do, I was drawn into the program by two seniors. Going into the conference, I carried nothing but my bill, and expectations that grew higher and higher as my friends gushed over what they described as "the best weekend of the year." But every aspect of the NYS Youth and Government conference that year went above-and-beyond anything I could have conjured in my mind. It was a rewarding first year in Youth and Government for my bill, which passed in committee, was signed by the governor, and even won the Outstanding Bill Award. More importantly, however, this bill made me a passionate advocate for prison reform. Following that line of my newfound interest, this year I have been chosen to be the Commissioner of Correctional Facilities in the Youth Governor's cabinet.

Aside from my bill, the experience of the conference itself, from the most heated debates to the "wild" dance night, was absolutely thrilling. I was immediately able to appreciate all the work that got put into organizing the conference and wanted to be a part of it all. So to ensure that delegates have the best possible experience this year at the Desmond Hotel and at the NYS Capitol building, I am also a District 10 representative in the Conference Life Committee which oversees the technicalities of how the conference is run. The overall feeling I had on the way back home from the conference was a desire to be more involved. I loved the energy of the conference, the positive impact it has on the community, and the delegates were some of the most intellectual and energetic people I have ever met. Apart from Youth and Government, I have plenty of experience demonstrating my capability in leadership positions. For one, I am a Project Manager in the executive staff of SciExcite (non-profit, student-led organization dedicated to bringing science to children in city schools, refugee centers, libraries, museums, etc.), which entails planning biweekly meetings and organizing several events that occur monthly. I am also secretary of the Refugee Outreach Club Association, in which three neighboring schools work together to hold fundraisers, drives, and special events with the goal of helping refugees in the local and global community thrive. Not only have I chaired at the Interdistrict Conference in Rochester, but I was also a chair for the African Union committee in the Central New York Model United Nations conference. All of these roles have prepared me to plan efficiently, comfortably handle crisis situations, and make in-depth connections with individuals of all backgrounds.

Why are you seeking this office and what do you feel you have to offer your peers if selected as one of their leaders for the coming year?

Attending the conference last year, I was astounded by the immense sense of support that came from the entire community of Youth and Government students and advisors. Though there might have been some passionate disagreements on school safety, drugs, or solitary confinement, I admired and deeply respected the way that delegates could come together as good friends after a period of intense debate and laugh or congratulate one another. I genuinely fell in love with this program, and it's one of the reasons why I decided to run this year for this office. I want to help nurture the general good atmosphere of the conference, but also lead productive debate, helping newer delegates to be confident and speak up. As the only returning member of my faction of District 10 and working with a brand new advisor, I did not hesitate to take on the responsibilities of training the new legislative delegates and guiding new judicial delegates in the right direction. I loved encouraging the new delegates to speak and I was so excited to celebrate every success with them, no matter how small. My passion in helping delegates, my unhesitant willingness to take on responsibilities, and being inspired by some truly touching acts of servant leadership at my first conference has become my biggest reason for running for this office this year. Though this is only my second year in Youth and Government, I have shown time and time again, my commitment to this program. I have made tremendous strides in the short time that I have been a part of this community, and I continue to display my unwavering dedication to NYS Youth and Government, which has become one of the biggest priorities in my high-school career. I hope that you will grace me with the opportunity to help improve this admirable program and become the student leader you need to have an unforgettable conference.

Define servant leadership and describe how you plan to incorporate this if elected into office:

Servant leadership is when one's actions and decisions reflect what is best for the whole. They are fully committed to making sacrifices, giving up what is easiest for them in order to aid the group. A student leader does not have a pedestal, and don't need one, because they are able to effectively lead within the people through personal interactions and putting others' concerns above their own. As Speaker of Assembly Liberty, I would incorporate servant leadership by working hard to make sure that every delegate's views and ideas are all heard and respected. I value everyone's success and happiness, and I have never been afraid to uphold these standards even when it is at the expense of my own comfort. The principles that the conference stands for and the benevolent nature of all the delegates and advisors has inspired me to give back to this program, for it has done a great deal for my confidence and positive attitude. I will unflinchingly represent all the ideas that encompass "student leadership," making myself accessible to delegates and districts and encouraging them to seek help when needed. Regardless of my personal views and obligations, I will ensure that all of the delegates' needs will be addressed fairly. I will do my part in ensuring that the 2021 state conference will be as extraordinary and successful as the ones before with my resolute dedication to this program and its people.

