

# Youth Leadership Academy

**“I AM college-bound!  
I AM on the path to success!”**

## WHO WE ARE

The YLA is a 501c3 non-profit organization delivering a unique program for students from low-income backgrounds who want to go to college. We offer leadership training sessions two Saturdays per month during the academic year to our cadets (7th – 12th grade) from across the Elgin Community College District 509, which includes Illinois school districts U-46, D300, D301, and D303. In addition to this leadership program which is reviewed each year by YLA staff to assure it is meeting the needs of YLA students, we offer field trips to visit colleges and universities, many opportunities to volunteer in community events and special classes for parents of YLA cadets. At the conclusion of their six years with YLA, if students are in good academic standing when they graduate from high school, they will be awarded a full tuition scholarship to attend Elgin Community College for two consecutive years to complete an associate’s degree. Further, an additional full tuition scholarship at Judson University for two more years to complete a bachelor’s degree may be available.

## OUR MISSION is ...

To engage and inspire youth to maximize their potential to become successful community leaders through the access and responsible utilization of post-secondary education.

## GET INVOLVED!!!

- ✓ **DONATE** ... as a 501c3 non-profit organization, the YLA operates fully on dollars donated from community leaders, partners, and grants.
- ✓ **VOLUNTEER** ... there are many different kinds of opportunities for people to support our efforts with their time and energy.
- ✓ **TELL YOUR FRIENDS** ... get the word out about the YLA in your networks. Encourage 6th graders to apply!

## TO LEARN MORE

Visit us online at [www.ylaecc.org](http://www.ylaecc.org)

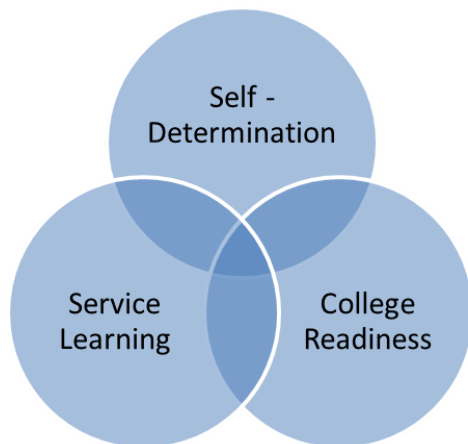
Visit our offices at  
410 Renner Drive, Elgin, IL 60123  
(*ECC main campus—Building K, room 109*)  
Office hours: 9:00—3:00 pm, M-F  
Call us at 847-214-6910 or 6965.  
Check us out on Facebook!

Dianha Ortega-Ehreth,  
Executive Director



## Some YLA Numbers:

- Since its first graduating class in 2002, the YLA has helped over 100 students from the community gain access to college.
- 80% of YLA graduates enroll in Elgin Community College after high school. The remaining 20% of YLA graduates have enrolled at a number of other higher education institutions such as Northwestern University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois-Chicago, University of Iowa, Carthage College and many more!
- 306 – the minimum number of leadership training hours YLA cadets complete over 6 years
- 112 – the total number of cadets currently being served by the YLA as of October 2012
- 1,072 - the total number of volunteer hours completed by YLA cadets over the Summer of 2012
- 18 – number of people on the YLA staff team which includes administration, trainers, mentors, tutors and other volunteers.
- \$1000 – estimated amount that it costs to deliver a quality leadership training program per student per year. Thanks to grants and donations from our supporters, the amount that it costs families to participate in the YLA is \$0.



### The YLA Program is focused on:

- **Self Determination** — a philosophy founded on the principle that an individual is the primary activating factor in his or her life. In all that we do, cadets practice responsibility in decision-making and goal-setting.
- **College Readiness**—cadets are provided free academic tutoring in YLA PLUS in addition to support in the college admission and financial aid process.
- **Service Learning** — this is a 5-step process that invites cadets to put their leadership skills to practice as they make their communities better places to be.

## How do I get in to YLA?

The YLA application is open to 6<sup>th</sup> graders only (from U-46, D300, D301 and D303) every year beginning January 1. The deadline for the application is mid-March. You can ask your school principal for the application or print it off from the YLA web site or you can come to the YLA office to pick one up. The YLA admission process is selective. This means that not all students who apply are accepted into the program. Because of our limited class size (25), program design and funding, YLA gives preference to students who qualify for either free or reduced lunch. The application includes recommendations from teachers and a family interview.

