



The Colorado Youth Advisory Council

3rd Annual Legislative Report

May 2011

COYAC



A report from the Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) to the Colorado General Assembly concerning the progress of the Council from February 1, 2010 – May 31, 2011

Table of Contents

History and Background	3
Key Accomplishments During 2010	3
Getting actively involved with the legislative process during the 2010 session	3
Creating recruitment, application, and enrollment procedures.....	4
Establishing internal leadership roles and committee structures	4
Developing greater knowledge of policy issues and the policy making process	6
Looking Ahead	6
Goals for 2011	7
Evaluate and weigh in on more policy options from a youth perspective.....	7
Increase COYAC's profile and visibility in the community.....	7
Help to build a statewide youth network.....	7
Increase the number and diversity of applicants for each open seat	7
Appendix A: Colorado Youth Advisory Council Members 2009-10	8
Members in Alphabetical Order.....	8
Members by District*	9
Appendix B: Sponsors	10
Founding Supporter	10
Lead Youth Sponsors.....	10
Youth Sponsor	10
Supporters.....	10



Staffing for the Colorado Youth Advisory Council provided by the Civic Canopy. For more information, contact Bill Fulton at 303-292-3144 or bill@civiccanopy.org

History and Background

The Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) was established on May 29, 2008 “to examine, evaluate, and discuss the issues, interests, and needs facing Colorado Youth and to formally advise and make recommendations to elected officials regarding those issues” (HB 08-1157). COYAC is a vehicle, created by the Colorado State Legislature, to give young people an opportunity to offer first-hand information to our legislators about issues affecting Colorado's teens. The first class of Council members were appointed in the summer of 2008. Thirty five were appointed by state senators (one per district) and five by the Speaker of the House at the time, Andrew Romanoff, as at-large members to better represent the diversity of Colorado's youth—in particular, rural youth.



Rep. Ellen Roberts and Rep. Andy Kerr

The Council also includes four non-voting legislative members: **Senator Ellen Roberts, Representative Andy Kerr, Senator Michael Johnston, and Sen. Chris Romer.**

Sen. Nancy Spence and Sen. Chris Romer

At the time of its first annual report to the General Assembly in January 2009, the Council's accomplishments had consisted primarily of establishing the policies and procedures needed to help COYAC function as an effective body—e.g. agreeing on decision-making mechanisms, establishing a code of conduct, setting up policy and procedural committees, and creating a process for new members to apply to join COYAC.

Key Accomplishments During 2010-2011

Getting actively involved with the legislative process during the 2009 session

- Youth Co-Chair Elliot Reaven presented testimony on HB 09-1099, which was introduced to improve upon the enabling legislation that created COYAC.

COYAC 2009 Youth-Co Chair Elliot Reaven testifies on HB 09-1099, with Sen. Romer, Sen. Penry and COYAC Coordinator Stephanie Walton



Teambuilding activities at the October kick-off meeting

- The COYAC Environment Committee worked to help pass two resolutions—Senate Joint Resolution 09-049 encouraging greater environmental awareness related to Earth Day and Senate Resolution 09-016 encouraging schools to develop recycling programs.
- COYAC hosted two “meet and greets” with legislators at the beginning of both the 2009 and the 2010 Sessions for COYAC members to get to know their individual representatives.

Creating recruitment, application, and enrollment procedures

- The COYAC Membership Committee developed an application process to replace senatorial appointments for selecting new members to COYAC, as stipulated in the enabling statute
- The Council successfully recruited and selected new members to fill the open spots on the Council (each term is two years, with half of the first round of Council members serving one year terms to stagger the rotation of members).
- The Executive Committee developed bylaws and meeting procedures, and brought them to the full COYAC body for approval.



COYAC members meet with legislators at first meet and greet

Establishing internal leadership roles and committee structures

- The Council elected its second round of officers at the October meeting. The officers serve one year terms and comprise the Executive Committee for the Council:
 - Youth Co-Chair: Stuart Jenkins, Carbondale
 - Youth Vice Chair: Anthony Gallozzi, Aurora
 - Secretary: Mandy Cramer, Colorado Springs
 - Treasurer: Annsley Brophy, Yuma
- At its October kick off meeting, the Council welcomed its new members, reviewed its policies and procedures, worked to hone communication skills of Council



members to communicate with legislators, and then created committees in the following areas to research and track legislation during the 2010 session:

- Economic Development
- Education

- Environment
- Human Rights
- Social Health
- Transportation
- During their January 2010 meeting, COYAC members fine-tuned their internal committee structure to ensure the business and procedures of the Council can be carried out. Procedural committees consist of the following:
 - Communication
 - Membership
 - Outreach
 - Finance

Developing greater knowledge of policy issues and the policy making process

- In the October 2009 meeting, Barbara Miller and Gail Schatz from the Center for Education in Law and Democracy presented a workshop on how to best communicate with legislators to make sure your views are heard.
- At the January 2010 meeting, COYAC members met with Governor Ritter and First Lady Jeannie Ritter to learn about the Mansion, discuss current policy issues and to understand the Governor's upcoming legislative agenda.
- Staff from the Legislative Services team shared with COYAC members the full process of an idea becoming a bill, and a bill becoming a law. They also explained how fiscal notes are determined, and what role fiscal notes can play in the legislative process.

Looking Ahead

Having established the underlying processes and structures needed to run an effective Council, COYAC enters 2010 with hopes to greatly increase the impact of youth voice in the policy-making process in Colorado. In general terms, the Council is hoping to both respond to existing bills in the short term, and more proactively work with legislators to initiate policy proposals in the future. This will entail creating a new, statewide network of



COYAC members meet in procedural committees to conduct Council business



Governor and First Lady Jeannie Ritter addressed COYAC at the Governor's Mansion.



COYAC met with a panel of Legislative Service Staff to learn about the policy making process.

youth and youth-serving organizations in Colorado.

Goals for 2010

Evaluate and weigh in on more policy options from a youth perspective

COYAC will develop more effective ways to track existing legislation, weigh the merits of the arguments, gather youth input on proposals, and share their findings with legislators.

COYAC members will develop closer ties to their individual legislators and be more visible as a vehicle for sharing youth perspective on bills.

Increase COYAC's profile and visibility in the community

- Expand the number of contacts the Council makes with local and statewide media organizations to ensure broader publication of COYAC's work.
- Develop more strategic partnerships with schools, youth-serving organizations, civic organizations, and youth leadership programs to increase awareness of COYAC's role in the state.
- Improve the quality of the COYAC website and use other social networking platforms to engage youth in policy-related discussions.

Help to build a statewide youth network

- Work with other youth and youth-serving organizations around the state to connect existing efforts and communication networks into a more unified and reliable way to surface youth perspective on issues.
- Hold forums in schools and regions around the state to help determine the top issues of concern and interest to youth in Colorado.

Increase the number and diversity of applicants for each open seat

- Recruit students through existing statewide networks of youth, including and especially those that promote civic education (e.g. Colorado Close Up, Project Citizen, 4H, Youth in Government, etc.).
- Recruit more intentionally in schools and communities that have higher concentrations of groups not sufficiently represented in COYAC to date to better reflect the diversity of Colorado youth.
- Recruit more intentionally through schools and programs that serve "atypical leaders" and students who may not have always been successful in a traditional school environment.

"There's no better way to acquaint youth with the importance of finding their voice in representative democracy than to give them that opportunity firsthand. Forming a legislative youth council is one way to provide that opportunity and will also help legislators make better decisions on policies affecting our youth."

--COYAC Sponsor
Rep. Ellen Roberts

Appendix A: Colorado Youth Advisory Council Members 2009-10

Members in Alphabetical Order

Ashley Achee

Cherry Hills Village
Kent Denver High School
Senate District 26

Parker Alton

Colorado Springs
Cheyenne Mountain High School
Senate District 12

Daniel Arsenault

Highlands Ranch
Homeschooled
Senate District 30

Annsley Brophy--Treasurer

Eckley
Yuma High School
Senate District 1

Evan Burnett

Loveland
Loveland High School
Senate District 15

Mandy Cramer--Secretary

Colorado Springs
Coronado High School
Senate District 9

Allison Fox

Grand Junction
Fruita Monument High School
Senate District 7

Anthony Gallozzi—Vice Chair

Aurora
Grandview High School
Senate District 27

Lanna Giauque

Windsor
Greeley-Weld High School
At-Large

Stuart Jenkins—Youth Co-Chair

Carbondale
Glenwood Springs High School
Senate District 8

Cade Karlberg

Eaton
Eaton High School
Senate District 13

Derek Kirchhoefer

Monument
Lewis Palmer High School
Senate District 4

Maggie Kopel

Boulder
Boulder High School
Senate District 18

Tim Longfield

Hotchkiss
Hotchkiss High School
At-large

Elizabeth (Ki) Lynn

Cheraw
Cheraw High School
Senate District 2

Cheyenne McCoy

Dolores
Dolores High School
At-large

Cory Mowbray

Aurora
Smoky Hill High School
Senate District 28

Angie Neslin

Denver
George Washington High School
Senate District 32

Amanda Patarino

Lakewood
Lakewood High School
Senate District 21

Grant Peterson

Littleton
Chatfield High School
Senate District 22

Teo Price-Broncucia

Denver
East High School
Senate District 34

Tiasha Roland

Pueblo
Southern Colorado Early College
Senate District 3

Erica Romberg

Evergreen
Lakewood High School
Senate District 16

Aeryn Romero

Colorado Springs
Senate District 11

Peter Scher

Golden
D'Evelyn High School
Senate District 20

Kelcie Scott

Durango
Durango High School
Senate District 6

Angelina Sierra-Sandoval

Westminster
Holy Family High School
Senate District 31

Thomas Tarler

Denver
George Washington High School
Senate District 35

Alante Thalley

Aurora
Smoky Hill High School
At-large

Glorianna Tillerman-Dick

Denver
Regis University
Senate District 34

Ellen Tucker

Buena Vista
Buena Vista High School
At-large

Faythe Utsey

Denver
East High School
Senate District 33

Reh Vanatta

Poncha Springs
Salida High School
Senate District 5

Caroline Wockner

Fort Collins
Polaris Expeditionary Learning HS
Senate District 14

Members by District***District COYAC Member**

1 Annsley Brophy
2 Elizabeth (Ki) Lynn
3 Tiasha Roland
5 Reh Vanatta
6 Kelcie Scott
7 Allison Fox
8 Stuart Jenkins
9 Amanda Cramer
11 Aeryn Romero
12 Parker Alton
13 Cade Karlberg
14 Caroline Wockner
15 Evan Burnett
16 Erica Romberg
18 Maggie Kopel
20 Peter Scher
21 Amanda Patarino

District COYAC Member

22 Grant Petersen
26 Ashley Achee
27 Anthony Gallozzi
28 Cory Mowbray
30 Daniel Arsenault
31 Angelina Sierra-Sandoval
32 Angie Neslin
33 Faythe Utsey
34 Teo Price-Broncucia
34 Glorianna Tillerman-Dick
35 Thomas Tarler
At Large Tim Longfield
At Large Ellen Tucker
At Large Cheyenne McCoy
At Large Lanna Giauque
At Large Alante Thalley

*Seats in Senate Districts 4, 10, 19, 23, 24 and 25 do not currently have members

Appendix B: Sponsors

COYAC is extremely grateful to the sponsors who have supported our work to date. We would especially like to thank the El Pomar Foundation, which stepped forward to support the vision of youth involvement in government with a grant covering half of our estimated first annual budget. Their commitment to youth engagement is valued and appreciated.

Founding Supporter



The El Pomar Foundation

Lead Sponsors



Anschutz
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BP America



Children's Hospital



La Plata Electric
Association

Sponsors

College in Colorado - \$500

Supporting Organizations

Aponte and Busam

Rocky Mountain Health Plans

League of Women Voters

Staff

Bill Fulton, Co-Director

Drew O'Connor, Co-Director

Sarrah LeMoss, Coordinator