



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Dear Administrators & Educators,

Since 1936, the YMCA Youth and Government program has offered students around the nation the opportunity to represent their communities and schools in model state governments. Today, over 50,000 students participate in YMCA Youth and Government in 38 states and the District of Columbia.

The Kentucky YMCA Youth Association has offered YMCA Youth and Government through our Kentucky Youth Assembly (KYA) and Kentucky United Nations Assembly (KUNA) programs since 1946.

Each year, nearly 8,000 students across the Commonwealth take part in one or both of these programs. Many of these students also participate in school-based Student YMCAs, performing hundreds of hours of service and attending leadership conferences in the winter and summer.

For these students, the Student YMCA, along with our YMCA Youth and Government programs, often represent one of their most significant extracurricular commitments. Our students dedicate hundreds of hours each year to the program – many of them participating for all 7 years of middle and high school.

To honor this extraordinary commitment made by our participants, the YMCA Youth and Government program has established **an official nationwide red, white, and blue Graduation Honor Cord.**

This cord, along with a Senior Class gift, is presented to every graduating senior who has attended either KYA or KUNA for at least 2 years, including his or her senior year. First-year seniors who attend both KYA and KUNA their senior year also receive cords.

Many schools and school districts request confirmation and approval for the wearing of cords during graduation events, and we are sending this letter to verify that the cords worn by our graduating Y participants represent a level of achievement that every school and district can be proud to recognize.

With nearly 300 middle and high schools across Kentucky offering YMCA Youth and Government to their students, we hope you will join the Y in recognizing your students for their dedication to civic engagement and servant leadership.

If you have any questions about the Graduation Cords, the Kentucky YMCA, or the YMCA Youth and Government program, please don't hesitate to email our Advocacy & Development Director, Derek Summerville, at [derek@kyyymca.org](mailto:derek@kyyymca.org).

On behalf of the entire Kentucky YMCA family, thank you for supporting the Y at your school and in your community. We are honored to have played a part in the education of your students, and cannot wait to see where the future takes them.

Sincerely,

**Ben Reno-Weber**  
CEO, Kentucky YMCA Youth Association