

YMCA YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM

Assignment 1: Community Profile

Use this template to record your responses as you complete the assignment. To complete your assignment, please submit your responses online at www.ymcayag.org/yap using the link for [Assignment 1](#).

Part 1. Your YMCA Association & Branch

Whether you are member of the Y or not, you live in the "service area" of a specific YMCA **association**. For example: the YMCA of Metro DC serves all of Washington, DC, as well as parts of Virginia and Maryland. Each YMCA Association has physical locations called **branches** - the YMCA of Metro DC has 17 branches across DC, VA, and MD. Some associations only have one branch, while other associations have multiple branches (sometimes as many as 20-30 in larger cities/metro areas!)

You can find the branch closest to you by entering your zip code on the YMCA's "Find Your Y" website: <https://www.ymca.org/find-your-y>.

For the first part of your Community Profile, you'll need to schedule a meeting with the Executive Director, Program Director, or other on-site staff leader at the YMCA branch closest to you. If possible, we recommend meeting in-person at the branch, but if travel/distance is an issue, a virtual meeting will suffice.

Some of you may be very familiar with your local branch and staff, while others may be visiting their Y for the very first time! When contacting staff at your local branch to schedule your meeting, let them know you are a YMCA Youth Advocate who will be attending YMCA National Advocacy Days, and that you want to learn more about your local Y. This usually includes a tour of the facility, an overview of the Y's programs/services, and talking to other staff/members. Feel free to send them the template of your assignment so they can see the questions you'll be asking.

Feel free to take a selfie or a picture at the Y (or a screenshot in your virtual meeting), preferably with the staff member you are meeting, then post it to Instagram (or another platform) with #YAdvocates so we can share your visit with our network. While you're posting, feel free to follow YMCA accounts and leaders on both platforms: @YMCA, @YMCAadvocay, @YMCAYAG, and CEO Suzanne McCormick @iams McCormick.

Note: If both Youth Advocates from your state live near the same branch, feel free to arrange your meeting together! If not, you can visit separate branches close to where you each live.

1. What is the name of the YMCA Branch Director/Staff Member you met? (If you met with more than one, you can put both names!)
2. What is the director/staff member's position at the Y? (List all positions if you met with more than one).
3. What is the director/staff member's "Y-Story" - ask them about their journey with the Y, whether they were involved before they started working there, and how long they've worked for the Y and in what roles.

4. How many total branches does your YMCA association have? You can include notes about branch/location types (ex: Camps, Aquatics Centers, Charter Schools, etc.)
5. How many total members does your YMCA association have?
6. How many of your YMCA association's members are youth?
7. Does your YMCA association or branch have youth as part of their board(s) or governance structure?
8. Most YMCAs have a guide to their programs and services available to their members and guests. After speaking with staff and reviewing available program materials, what were some of the programs or services offered by the Y? Were there any that you didn't know your Y offered?
9. While many Ys offer similar programming around the country, most Ys also have programs/services that they design specifically to meet the needs of their communities. What is one (1) program or service that your Y offers that is designed specifically for YOUR community?
10. During your meeting, ask the director/staff member(s) you're interviewing: what's their favorite part, aspect, program, etc. - of their Y?
11. Does your local YMCA do any advocacy or public policy-related events, activities, programs or outreach? Have they had a visit from a public/elected official in the past year?
12. Selfie/Photo for Social Media: If you published your #YAdvocates post to Instagram (or another platform), please copy the link (URL) to the post below so we can share them with the Y network. (This is optional!)

Part 2. Your Congressional District

One of the most important pieces of YMCA National Advocacy Days is meeting with your Members of Congress. To help you prepare for your meeting with the Member of Congress from your congressional district, the second portion of your community profile is dedicated to learning about your district and US Representative.

You can find your Members of Congress by typing your address into this website:

<https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>

Each question about your respective district and representative is designed to provide you with background and context that will strengthen your presentations and conversations during your meetings with Members of Congress at National Advocacy Days.

13. Which Congressional District do you live in? You can check by typing your address into this website: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>

14. To prepare for your meeting with your Member of Congress, research your Congressional District. What are three important facts you want to remember about your district as you prepare?

15. Which US Representative represents your Congressional District? You can check by typing your zip code into this website: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
16. What is the party affiliation of your Member of Congress? Republican, Democrat, or Independent?
17. To prepare for your meeting with your Member of Congress, research their background/biography. What are three important facts you want to remember about your Representative as you prepare?
18. What is one (1) interesting bill that your Member of Congress has sponsored or co-sponsored while in office, and why do you find this bill interesting? You can see which bills your member has sponsored/co-sponsored at www.congress.gov. If your Member of Congress is new and hasn't yet taken office, what is (1) one priority listed on their campaign website that you found interesting?
19. Finally, take a few minutes and research whether your Member of Congress has any connection/relationship or history working with the YMCA. An easy way to do this is to search your Representative's name + "YMCA" on Google, local news outlets, and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. How is your Representative connected to the Y?
20. Before submitting, verify that all of the information you've copied from this template into the online form is finalized, then select "Complete."