

Christina Liu 2018-19 MYC Co-Chair

A conversation with Christina

1. How and when were you introduced to MYC?

I was introduced to the MYC when I was in the 8th grade, when my sister applied to become a commissioner. She became an MYC'er when she entered her senior year of high school. I remembered she'd always talk about the MYC as if it meant the world to her and when I joined my freshman year in high school, I understood her feelings.

2. What does it mean to be an MYC Co-Chair?

To me being an MYC co-chair means stepping up into a leadership role while also playing a supporting role on the side. It is about learning to balance power between two different people who come from different backgrounds and experiences. MYC co-chairs make sure that the voices of MYC'ers are heard and help with the growth of all members.

3. How do you balance school commitments and Co-Chair responsibilities?

The MYC means a lot to me, so it is high in my priority list. I will be a senior in the following school year and will be taking less classes, ensuring that I can make it to all meetings. I have been working my schedule around the MYC for the past 3 years and will continue to do the same. Prioritizing the MYC is something I am willing to do because I love the work we do so much.

4. Please share a few goals for the upcoming year.

One of my goals is to provide the space and the help needed in order to make sure every MYC'er's voice is heard, especially those who are quieter by nature. When I first entered the MYC, I was probably the most quiet person on the commission. The reason I grew so much was partly because of the co-chairs I had. They were such role models to me and helped me find my voice. I really want to be that person to MYC'ers - someone that they are able to be comfortable seeking help from. Another goal I have is to build better committee to committee relationships. The MYC has three different committees that make up the MYC as a whole. Everyone is comfortable in their own committees. I have observed that many MYC'ers only stay close to those in their own committees, being awkward with those who are not. I really want to be able to break that barrier and have those who are from different committees better familiarize themselves with each other. I believe this will create a better and stronger community. My third goal and one of my main goals for next year, is having every, or at least most, MYC'ers take something away from their experience with us. I want everyone to feel like they got out just as much as they put in. I know this might seem like a pretty unattainable goal, but there are so many people with different knowledge and

experiences on the MYC that it's pretty much impossible not to learn something new from each other (I know I learned a lot).

5. How has the MYC experience shaped your views on the importance of civic participation and engagement for youth?

Before I joined the MYC, I would have never thought that I would have a voice in any decision-making process and I know a lot of youth have the same thoughts as I did. Every day, adults are making policies and decisions that affect us youth, but we are never brought to the table for conversations. This made me think that my voice did not matter as much as those who were in power. After I joined the MYC though, I realized that I was wrong. Youth's voices and perspectives play an important role in improving our society. We know what it is like being youth in our communities and know what kinds of problems need to be fixed. Bringing youth engagement into important work is essential in creating an environment where youth can feel included and part of the community.