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ALABAMA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

2020 Goal: 'Providing as much info as possible'

By Turner Cole
2020 Editor in Chief



It is my honor to serve as your media editor-in-chief for the 72nd YMCA Youth Legislature. Participating in Youth in Government has been a highlight of my high school career, and hopefully, you feel the same.

Participants come from the Rocket City in the north to Mobile along the bay and many points in between, bringing their regional concerns and differences. However, we walk out of chambers knowing that our diversity is a strength. We differ in our political opinions, but every attendee strives to create a solid government of the people, by the people and for the people.

This year's media team plans to provide more information about the candidates running for office. We have created a voters' guide and have asked for video responses

to a question from each of the candidates. We hope you find it useful as you vote Saturday night. My personal goal is to provide as much information as possible. Our team is going to be inundating you with information via various platforms (Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter). We hope you will utilize what we provide and that you also use the #alyig2020 hashtag on your own social media. As Thomas Jefferson said, "Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government."

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Friday, February 21, 2020



Tomorrow TODAY

Building Tomorrow's Leaders TODAY

Governor Pavel Shirley: Youth Legislature bridges divides of outside world

By Pavel Shirley
2020 Youth Governor

Wow! Thanks for coming to the 72nd Alabama Youth Legislature! I've been floored by the quality of work I've seen you put into your bills, and I'm really looking forward to seeing everything else you accomplish this weekend.

This program bridges the gaps and divides we so often observe in the outside world. It has helped me become dear friends with people who profoundly disagree with me on any number of issues. Additionally, Youth Legislature connects us with people from polar opposite backgrounds in every corner of our state. If asked to describe the setup of this conference from afar, I would probably tell you it was going to be a disaster, the place



Gov. Pavel Shirley

would fall into discord and we'd all draw ourselves into small ideological corners. Yet time and time again, the sheer quality, integrity, and kindness of every participant has managed to shine through and prove doubters wrong.

Youth Legislature is not amazing because it brings together like-minded people; rather, this

conference is amazing because it brings radically unlike-minded people together. With that in mind, I encourage you to express yourself and your opinions this weekend. Never be afraid to raise your placard because when someone decides not to speak out of fear or lack of confidence we all lose. We all lose the depth of that person's perspective, opinions and hopes. More than any thing else, those qualities and beliefs are what can be truly transformative.

So thank you. Thank you for being here, thank you for caring and thank you for having fun. If you ever need anything don't be afraid to reach out to me, the Cabinet or any of the other officers, because, ultimately, you're the ones who matter, and we're just here for the ride.

Q & A with 2021 gubernatorial candidates

The TomorrowTODAY staff asked each candidate the same three questions. Read their responses below:



RYAN BARRANCO



VINCENT INDOVINA

How could Alabama's education system benefit from a state lottery?

Vincent Indovina: Our school systems, especially the schools in impoverished areas, could benefit greatly from extra funding from the lottery, but in order to prevent Alabama from hovering between 49th in 50th in the nation in education, we have to get to the root of the problem instead of piling more funds into the budget. Alabama will see a record education budget of \$7.1 billion in October of this year. In order for our education system to improve, we must rewrite our state's curriculum and gear it towards essential knowledge rather than test-based facts and mandate frequent evaluations of all teachers in the state of Alabama to ensure that our state's students are being adequately educated.

Ryan Barranco: Alabama's education system could benefit enormously from a state lottery. As governor it would be important to me that while money from a state lottery is being put into Alabama's education system, current funding must continue as well. As seen in states like Florida and Georgia, the state lottery cannot completely fund an education system and should still be backed by current funding. By instituting a state lottery, parents will have the opportunity to place their children in a better public education system, which is crucial to educating the next generation of Alabamians.

As governor, how would you deal with the current racial controversies surrounding Confederate monuments and flags in our state?

Ryan Barranco: It's not a secret that Alabama, although a great state, has a checkered past. Today, Alabama has a diverse racial demographic. In the past, Alabama was primarily a caucasian state; we now support a growing diversity of non-caucasian residents that increases yearly. There are currently 107 public confederate monuments throughout the state. Through current legislation, these monuments are protected at the state level. While I agree with the current legislation that requires local governments to obtain permission to remove Confederate monuments, I believe the views and opinions of the people of Alabama must be respected. That is why as governor, I would agree with the evaluation of Confederate monuments on a case-by-case basis, and only if deemed so by state government, the removal of said offensive monuments.

Vincent Indovina: As Alabamians, we have to recognize that our nation and state have taken part in dark and horrific events in history. We cannot grow as a society if we attempt to remove remnants of our past. Confederate monuments should not stand just because they were a part of history, they should stand as a reminder of what our society was compared to what it is now. We must constantly remind our state that we are all one people, and we must continue to strive for a more equal society, but we cannot accomplish equality without recognizing the horrific mistakes of our past.

How will application-based Supreme Court positions benefit the overall Youth Legislature experience and how would you utilize the Supreme Court part of the program more?

Vincent Indovina: The Supreme Court application process ensures that our current chief justice and the many who come after will be able to appoint the strongest candidates in order to make the debate from the court as energetic and as engaging as possible. As youth governor, I want to promote the Supreme Court and make it more accessible to every delegate so we can make the court just as popular as the House or the Senate by creating a calendar for Supreme Court hearings so all delegates can attend hearings that interest them.

Ryan Barranco: One of my favorite things about ALYIG is the insane amount of opportunities you have in the program. With applications to be on the Supreme Court, delegates can now get appointed to a Supreme Court position purely off of their qualifications and longing to get involved. Applications present a unique chance for delegates to obtain an officer position without the stress of an election. My goal is to thoroughly explain the positions available in the Supreme Court and explain the importance of the Supreme Court at the conference.

Tomorrow TODAY Staff



EDITOR IN CHIEF

Turner Cole

Evangel Christian School

LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC EDITOR

Lucy Edwards

St. James School - Montgomery

COPY EDITOR

Indira Singh

Vestavia Hills High School

BROADCAST MANAGER

Julia Fromm

Brewbaker Tech - Montgomery

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PHOTO EDITOR

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Montgomery Academy

TWITTER SPECIALIST/
PHOTOGRAPHER

Parker Roth

Montgomery Academy

SNAPCHAT SPECIALIST/
PHOTOGRAPHER

Laurie Wakefield

Montgomery Academy

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Cole Armagost, Erin Hosmer,

Mary Virginia Huffaker,

Saleena Jan, Janessa Madison

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