



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Wednesday, September 1, 2010

GOOD NEWS!
FROM THE VALLEY OF THE SUN YMCA

**YMCA's "Youth & Government" Program
Promotes Social Responsibility**

"Hands-on" program offers an "inside" look at Arizona state government

PHOENIX, AZ: ---The Valley of the Sun YMCA, through their Community Initiatives YMCA, and the Youth & Government program, promotes responsible citizenship in a democratic society. This unique program offers over 80 students, grades 9-12, the opportunity to experience and participate in the state governmental process. They learn how their community works, and more importantly, how they can help solve community issues.

Participation in Youth & Government is more than a trip to the State Capitol—it provides teens a chance to learn how Arizona government works from an "insiders point of view" through involvement in civic events and the annual Model Legislature Conference held every fall at the State Capitol in Phoenix. At the weekend conference, students play out their selected roles at the mock legislative session.

Throughout the program year, the student delegations meet weekly and each participant completes a minimum of 70 hours of work — as they practice parliamentary procedure, select topics of interest to be discussed at the state level, as well as research, write, present and defend a bill. Not only do the students learn about government, but they also develop life skills such as leadership, self-confidence, the importance of community service, and respect for others. The teens that have successfully completed the Youth & Government program are more likely to become "lifelong active citizens" in their communities.

The Valley of the Sun YMCA through their Community Initiatives and the Youth & Government program is proud to promote responsible citizenry — and to help develop our future community leaders.

The Community Initiatives YMCA is a strategic priority for youth development from the Valley of the Sun YMCA. This "branch without walls" operates youth development programming in YMCA service areas throughout Maricopa County and the State of Arizona. The youth development programs offered concentrate in four primary domains of service: High School Dropout Intervention, Work or College Readiness, Youth Leadership, and Youth delinquency prevention and intervention.

About the YMCA:

Over 2600 YMCAs serve 21 million people each year, including nearly 10 million children under the age of 18. YMCAs respond to critical social needs by drawing on their collective strength as one of America's largest not-for-profit community service organizations. Through a variety of programs and services focused on the holistic development of children and youth, family strengthening, and health and well being for all, YMCAs unite men, women and children of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, abilities and income levels. From urban areas to small towns, YMCAs have proudly served America's communities for nearly 160 years by building healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Visit valleymca.org to find your local YMCA

**For more information about the Youth and Government —
or to arrange for an interview with a Valley of the Sun YMCA Community Initiatives Representative,
please contact: Manda Hurdelbrink • 513.324.8610 cell**