

July/Aug 2007

YEO Frontline News

Not too young to serve:

A special feature by
Rep. Michael Garcia (CO)

One of the first memories I had after first being elected was being approached by a much older colleague. She put her arm around my shoulder and offered me mentoring and advice about the legislative process.



"If you have any questions or need anything, I am here to help you," she said.

I appreciated this offer of help, especially since I was just a rookie and, at 26 years old, I was the youngest member of the Colorado General Assembly.

This is one of many experiences during my service in the Colorado House of Representatives that compelled me to introduce House Concurrent Resolution 1002 during the 2007 legislative session. HCR 1002 submits a question to the Colorado voters asking whether the age to serve in the Colorado General Assembly should be changed from 25 years old to 21 years old.

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YEO NETWORK TOWN-GOWN FEATURE

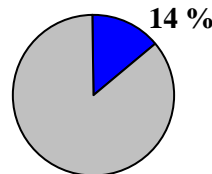
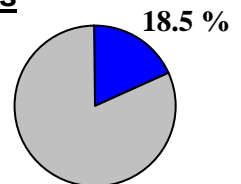
What is a Town-Gown?

Town and gown is a term used to describe the two communities of a university town; "town" being the non-academic population and "gown" the university community.



Town/Gown Network Stats

65 Total YEOs in the YEO Network were elected in Town-Gown Cities



31 Total Cities in the YEO Network are Town-Gown

ANNOUNCEMENT

YEO Documentary Film



San Francisco-based documentary filmmaker Sue Chen is producing a documentary about young elected officials who are making waves at all levels of government. It is the first film and outreach program of its kind to highlight the unique challenges, strategies and motivations of YEOs in particular. Sue shared some of her initial thoughts and plans for the film with Comm. Andrew Gillum in July, and we are exploring a possible collaboration.

Currently, Sue is looking for YEOs to interview for the research phase of the project, and interviewees will be considered for actual filming later in the year. For more information about the project, or to be interviewed, please call Raquel at 850-877-0307 or email rsimon@pfaw.org.

SERVING YOUNG

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All adults, regardless of their age, pay taxes just like every other adult. Yet, in Colorado, and many other states across the nation, some adults are allowed to serve in the Legislature while others aren't.

This isn't right.

When I first introduced HCR 1002, many of my older colleagues were resistant to the idea of giving younger adults the opportunity to serve.

"They don't have enough life experience." "Their brains are not fully developed." "There will be keg parties on the floor of the House of Representatives."

I calmly explained that HCR 1002 merely gives younger adults the opportunity to serve. These young adults, just like every other candidate, will have to make their case to the voters in their districts and win.

If the voters in a district pick a young adult to represent their interests, why shouldn't that adult have the right to represent them?

Young adults are just as capable and, in my experience, often times more capable of being effective policy makers and advocates for their constituents.

Young Elected Officials offer a valuable perspective that, quite frankly, is missing in many legislative bodies. HCR 1002 is a step in the right direction to bring that voice to the policy making process.

Young Elected Officials have many obstacles to overcome in being effective policy makers. Their age shouldn't be one of them.

All Politics is Local

By City Councilman Brandon Buchanan



As a progressive, it's easy to get excited about the big national issues like health care, minimum wage, and sustainability; however, for elected officials it's important to also think local. These local issues are a great opportunity for Young Elected Officials. If you create a lot of little changes, big change is inevitable and long lasting.

For the progressive movement to be sustainable, we must restore the people's faith in their government. Nowhere is that easier to do than at the local level addressing local issues.

At the local level, discussions revolve around a theme, like downtown revitalization or sustainability. Local politics attracts citizens that want to be involved in their community. They begin to feel connected to policy because they see that their leaders are not only listening to them, they're taking action.

Besides the local issues facing communities, some localities decide to take action when the state and federal government has failed to do so. In 2005, four cities in Wisconsin passed local minimum wage increases. Additionally, earlier this year San Francisco banned non-biodegradable plastic bags in a step toward sustainability.

The more involved the public gets in policy locally, the more likely we are to see effective changes. Maybe Washington will even follow our lead. The public wants to trust their government, even when they are at the height of their distrust. People want to believe in a better tomorrow. That gives progressives an advantage.

As YEOs, we can uniquely capitalize on that advantage because we are expected to be innovative and bold. Together, we in the YEO Network are that change, one issue and one community at a time.

Special Features?

If you have interesting policy or experiences to share with your fellow YEOs, please contact Raquel Simon at rsimon@pfaw.org to arrange to write a special feature.

Embracing the Future- Technology Today

There are several networking, base-building tools out there that are entirely based in modern technology.

Social network services allow people to come together online around shared interests, hobbies, or causes. These are the sites that allow an elected official or campaign to conduct networking with a targeted group of people, especially young voters.

Blogs are not to be overlooked, and a lot easier to understand than you think. Just as you could be a regular columnist for a newspaper or magazine, you can comment and communicate through existing progressive blogs. You can also start your own blog to reach constituents and allow them the space to comment and to ask question.

Below are the most popular web sites used for networking online. Explore some of these resources, and embrace some of the new and innovative ways elected officials can reach out to young constituents.

Social Networking- *used to gain viewers, readers and build a network*



YouTube is the largest online video site. Users can upload videos and easily share them. It's not just for teenagers who put up funny videos. Campaigns are now broadcasting messages, speeches, and documentaries. Recently, CNN and YouTube collaborated to host a national debate featuring questions from YouTube users across the country.

How to use it: YouTube shares videos. Everything from campaigning and fundraising to sending video messages to constituents can be done on YouTube.



MySpace is the third most popular site in the U.S. This site allows you to keep a large

network of friends, blog, share messages, share videos, share music, and design your page with endless HTML coding possibilities.

How to use it: Through your MySpace web page, you can tell your story, post events, keep in contact with constituents and post blogs. Campaigns also develop MySpace pages to drive an audience and support. It allows supporters to communicate with each other as well as the candidate to send messages. Campaigns have even managed to link fundraising into their MySpace pages.



Flickr is the biggest photo sharing community online. Users can set their pictures for viewing to the public, to a particular

contact or for friends only. It's an easy way to share pictures on the web without having to create a photo gallery within a web page.

How to use it: It's a photo album that everyone can see online. From documenting the campaign trail to develop-

ing albums for the most recent community events you were involved in, it makes your pictures available to everyone – or at least everyone that you want to see them. You can link these albums to your MySpace or Facebook pages, or to your web site.



Facebook has dominated the college campuses and the young adult scene all over the country, and has now

expanded to organizations and non-profits. Created with more limited access than MySpace, and originally for college students only, Facebook's popularity has grown dramatically. This site allows you to keep track of your friends, communicate easily through messages and emails, update your own status for others to view, easily begin interest groups for others to join, and share pictures.

How to use it: Facebook is much like MySpace in this sense – it's like having a web page that lets your friends post comments. Facebook, however, is more restricted from advertisers and outside sources and easily allows candidates and campaigns to start or join groups. These groups have forums and can be alerted to events. It's a great way for elected officials to keep in contact with the young people in the community.



LinkedIn is a relatively new networking site. A business-oriented social networking

site, the site allows users to maintain a list of contact details for their professional and personal contacts.

How to use it: Contacts within your LinkedIn profile are your direct connections. Connections can be used to find jobs, people and business opportunities. Employers can list jobs and search for potential candidates. Job seekers can review the profile of hiring managers and discover which of their existing contacts can introduce them.

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PROGRESSIVE PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

The League of Young Voters loves YEO!

By Billy Wimsatt, Executive Director,
League of Young Voters



The more I hear about YEO, I get excited. I think: “Now we have somewhere to send all of our young community leaders once they get elected! And we have a network of exciting young candidates to potentially support!”



The League of Young Voters is a national organization with major affiliates currently in California, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Wisconsin, and Maine, and networks across the country. We organize young people under 35 to turn out voters, elect candidates, impact policy on our issues. We have a c3, c4, Federal PAC and State PACs. We have helped swing 14 local and state elections; worked on

initiatives from criminal justice to LGBT rights, energy to electoral reform; contacted 600,000+ voters, created 250+ voter guides and voter slates in 31 states. Many of you have been endorsed by our local affiliates. We hire talented up-and-coming community leaders, mainly in low-income communities, to develop innovative ways to engage young people locally.

In Maine, we mobilized 500 volunteers to collect 73,000 signatures for an innovative ballot initiative called Opportunity Maine (which we can help you replicate) that uses tax-credits to forgive up to \$32,000 in student debt for students who stay in state after graduation. It was so popular the State legislature passed it before it reached the ballot. Last month, the Pittsburgh League’s PAC worked to elect three candidates including the first openly gay city councilmember. The League model is adaptable: impassioned organizers can replicate our strategies anywhere.

We look forward to partnering with YEO –and sending you more members soon. If you would like to reach out to us, please don’t hesitate to contact the League of Young Voters at 718-305-4245.

Right Wing Watch

Supreme Court Strikes Down Integration Plans

In the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2006-2007 term, the Court revisited the legal foundation for using race as a factor in public school admission – this time in Louisville, Kentucky and Seattle, Washington. School districts in both cases, which were joined, stated that they voluntarily used race as a factor in admission to ensure more diverse public schools.

The Court’s (5-4) ruling declared both programs to be unconstitutional, although Justice Kennedy, who sided with the majority, wrote that race could still be considered a “compelling interest.” The ruling sharply limits school districts’ ability to integrate schools, but may leave the door open for some modest action.

The Louisville case, *Meredith v. Jefferson County Public Schools* was initiated by Crystal Meredith, who sued the school district for racial discrimination. Meredith claimed her son was denied admission into his neighborhood school because of the school district’s policy requiring between 15 percent and 50 percent minority student population for racial diversity in the schools.

“Joshua was denied entrance to a school for no other reason than racial classification,” Meredith’s attorney Teddy Gordon told ABC News. “There was room at the school. There were plenty of empty seats. This was a racial quota.”

Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District is a challenge to Seattle school district’s use of racial guidelines among other requirements when assigning students to public schools. Ted Shaw, president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund told Amy Goodman of Democracy Now! the cases are the “last gasp of *Brown v. Board of Education*,” the landmark 1954 Court decision declaring separate public schools unconstitutional.

“To equate segregation with attempts to integrate is simply a false equation. It’s a hijacking of the principles of *Brown*, standing it on its head, and a perversion of the 14th Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause,” said Shaw.

The last time the Supreme Court heard a case on race-based admission, retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor provided the decisive fifth vote that upheld the University of Michigan Law School’s affirmative action program.

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YEOs IN THE NEWS

NEW YORK, NY – Assemblyman Michael Gianaris

In what would be the first legislation of its kind, the New York Senate has approved a measure to require airlines operating at New York airports to provide passengers delayed on planes for three hours or more with water, snacks and working waste disposal systems. The measure, called the Airline Passengers Bill of Rights, is before the State Assembly and is expected to pass that body soon. Bill co-sponsor Assemblyman Michael Gianaris said he had "lost a lot of respect" for the airline industry as a result of recent delays. "We're talking about people who pay hundreds of dollars for a ticket," Gianaris said. "To suggest they should not have water or a bathroom for 10 hours is outrageous."

<http://www.newsday.com/business/ny-bzair0622.0.3175318.story?coll=ny-business-leadheadlines>



PORTLAND, ME – State Representative and Majority Leader Hannah Pingree

EqualityMaine celebrated as the Maine Legislature passed an amendment to the state's Family Medical Leave Act, extending its protections to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees. The Family Medical Leave Act allows employees to take off limited work time to care for a sick spouse, parent, child, and now domestic partner. The bill, co-sponsored by State Representative Hannah Pingree, had strong support in both chambers, passing the House by a vote of 95-41 and the Senate by 28-5. It is expected that Governor Baldacci will sign the bill into law.

<http://business.maintoday.com/newsdirect/release.html?id=4452>



PITTSBURGH, PA – State Representative Josh Shapiro

Seeking to stop a medical "brain drain" across the state, a Philadelphia lawmaker wants to subsidize medical school tuition for aspiring Pennsylvania doctors. Rep. Josh Shapiro said that state forgiveness of medical school loans could serve as a powerful incentive to keep young doctors in Pennsylvania and ensure continued access to health care for the state's aging population. "This is a crisis that is brewing," Shapiro said. "If we don't have enough doctors practicing ... the quality of our health care will diminish." Only eight percent of residents graduating from the state's medical schools remain in Pennsylvania, compared with 50 percent a decade ago. Many veteran doctors plan to retire during the next decade, he added, while only a small percentage of Pennsylvania's doctors are under age 35.

http://www.citizensvoice.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=18426559&BRD=2259&PAG=461&dept_id=455147&rfti=6



RHODE ISLAND – State Representative Edwin R. Pacheco

The Rhode Island state legislature passed a bill sponsored by Rep. Edwin Pacheco that allows 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote, making them automatically eligible once they turn 18. The bill passed without much fanfare at the last minute before the legislative session ended, and it is up to Governor Donald Carcieri to sign it into law.

http://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_paul_fid_070625_carcieri_should_sign.htm



RWW: Supreme Court Strikes Down Integration

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"The right-wing majority on this Court has let us down again. They've attacked these school districts for simply trying to fulfill the vision of Brown," said Judith Schaeffer, Legal Director at People For the American Way Foundation. "Decades of progress do not stand a chance in the Roberts court. This decision underscores why the courts and judicial nominees matter."

Provided by People For the American Way

Technology Today

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Blogging- used to get messages and opinions out through alternative media



LIVEJOURNAL

LiveJournal is one of the oldest blogging platforms around. LiveJournal is a virtual community where Internet users can keep a blog, journal, or diary.

LiveJournal's differences from other blogging sites include its popular self-contained community and some social networking features similar to, but pre-dating, MySpace.

How to use it: LiveJournal is a blogging community where a constituent or candidate can regularly speak about local issues and concerns. It also allows people to comment.



My DD is a group blog designed to discuss campaigns, the progressive movement, and political power. MyDD does polling, research, commentary, analysis, and activism. It's also a social network, and will ban bloggers they find to be bashing progressives or spamming the system.

How to use it: Read it. It's a mine field of progressive talk. Second, you can always become a feature blogger and post about progressive issues in your community.



DailyKos is an online political community with traffic of about 600,000 daily visits. Among its many diary posters, DailyKos has had many notable guest bloggers such as President Jimmy Carter, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and dozens of other members of Congress and governors.

How to use it: Again, read it. To get involved in the online progressive community, commenting on blogs and even contacting the editors with an original piece could get some exposure.



YP4 Blog- YEO Network's sister program, Young People For (YP4), has a lively blog at <http://blog.youngpeoplefor.org/>.

Most posters are current and former YP4 fellows – progressive college students and recent graduates. In addition, YP4 features guest bloggers, from elected officials to leaders in the progressive community. This is a great opportunity for YEOs who want to reach out to a young

demographic and have interesting conversations with fellow progressive leaders. For more information on how you can be a guest blogger on the YP4 Blog, please contact Raquel Simon at rsimon@pfaw.org.

Staying Informed

These are a few other recommendations to help stay informed and keep track of media using the Internet.



RSS Feed (Really Simple Syndication) publishes frequently updated content that you can sign up for, such as blog entries or news headlines. RSS makes it possible for people

to keep up with their favorite web sites in an automated manner that's easier than checking them manually.

How to use it: Several internet services could be your RSS Feed reader- such as AOL, Google Reader, and Yahoo. Sign up and make sure you have an account. Then go to major news outlets, periodicals, and blogs and register to receive their RSS feed according to your topic or interest. It will be sent to your reader- like Google Reader for example- and you can check your news as often or as little as you want.



Google Alerts is a great way to track clips that the media has put out – especially about you. Just decide

the keywords to track and then an email will be sent to your desired email address whenever an article pops up with those words.

How to use it: You or your staff can use this tool to track your clips and media. It's not all-comprehensive, but it's pretty good at catching clips in most major papers and online news.

YEO NETWORK UPDATES

Election Results

The following YEOs were re-elected during the month of June:

Massachusetts State Representative Anthony Petrucelli won a special election this past month to fill a vacancy in the Massachusetts State Senate. Petrucelli won the Senate seat with 59 percent of the vote.

Mayor Harry Zikas, Jr. won his primary election to the City Council of Alpha, New Jersey. Zikas decided not to run for re-election as Mayor to seek a City Council seat instead. He won his primary and faces no opposition in the Fall.

City Councilman Marty Small was re-elected to the Atlantic City Council with 86 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary. He faces no opposition this fall.

TIPS: PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL

Top Ten Tips to Mobilize Young Voters

1) Keep young voters on your call and walk lists: A contact at the door can increase turnout among young voters by 8-10 percentage points; a live phone call can increase turnout by 3-5 points.

2) Utilize volunteers to mobilize fellow young voters: Volunteers are a cost-effective and efficient way to mobilize young voters. Recruit volunteers, give them training, ambitious goals, and lots of responsibility, and they can do great work.

3) Talk about issues in ways relevant to young adults: Health care, education, job creation, Iraq, the environment, and taxes are all key issues for young voters, but make the issues relevant. Talk about health care access for young adults – not Medicare.

4) Candidates should mingle and chat with young voters at events: Go to college campuses, attend happy hours or picnics, and talk to these voters about issues that matter. Don't give a stump speech - listen to and answer questions, and engage in a conversation.

5) Do voter registration: Registering new voters is the best way to build a list of turnout targets and potential volunteers. Once registered, young adults are very likely to vote: in 2004, 81 percent of *registered* 18-29 year olds voted. (U.S. Census Bureau) Remember to collect emails and cell phones so you can follow-up with volunteer opportunities, voter education, and GOTV reminders.

6) Maximize the crowd: Big crowds of young supporters are a goldmine, but you have to work it. Target your speech by talking about relevant issues; open up a Q&A and have a

good conversation; encourage everyone to whip out their cell phones and text "Vote" to your campaign's short-code; make sure volunteers are roaming the audience registering voters and signing up volunteers; ask the audience to take an action to support a hot issue or hit the streets to register voters.

7) Allocate Resources: Young voters can be mobilized efficiently, but don't expect it to be free. Allocate staff time and a budget to run a top-notch effort. For example, two or three staff can run a state campaign; one or a half a person's time can do a significant amount on the district level.

8) Get updated lists of young voters: A few tactics can help your campaign build a better list of young voters: buy a brokered voter file from a youth registration campaign; get the updated voter files from the county clerk late in the election cycle to catch new registrants; or hold a volunteer phone bank to update voters' contact information.

9) Use new technology strategically: New technologies – social networking sites, text messaging, etc. – can help a campaign keep in touch with young voters with updates, volunteer opportunities, events, and more. However, remember that new technologies are a good campaign supplement, but not a substitute for old-fashioned peer-to-peer organizing and candidate outreach.

10) Save your money: Don't use robocalls or direct mail alone for GOTV. Direct mail works well for registration, and robocalls can supplement door-knocking or direct mail. The best advice is to utilize volunteer or live phone banks – the more personal the contact, the greater the impact.

For more tips and sample campaigns plans, see Young Voter Strategies' handbooks Winning Young Voters and Young Voter Mobilization Tactics I and II, available at www.youngvoterstrategies.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Council of State Governments:

Annual Midwestern Legislative Conference
August 26-29, 2007 Traverse City, Michigan
<http://www.csgmidwest.org>

Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund:

23rd Annual Texas Dinner
September 14, 2007 San Antonio, Texas
<http://www.maldef.org>

The Council of State Governments:

Western Annual Conference
September 16-19, 2007 Jackson Hole, Wyoming
<http://www.csgwest.org>

United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce:

28th Annual National Convention
September 19-22, 2007 San Juan, Puerto Rico
<http://www.ushcc.com>

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc:

Annual Legislative Conference
September 26-29, 2007 Washington, DC
<http://www.cbccfinc.org>

Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund:

33rd Los Angeles Dinner
October 30, 2007 Los Angeles, California
<http://www.maldef.org>

Job Announcements

Finance Director, Political Director, Communications Director Rock The Vote

Washington, DC

Rock the Vote, founded nearly twenty years ago at the intersection of popular culture and politics, is growing its team and its campaigns to support the tidal wave of young people who want to get involved in elections and seize the power of the youth vote to create progressive political and social change. Rock the Vote is seeking a Finance Director, Political Director and Communications Director. The ideal candidates are willing to work hard (social & political change doesn't always happen between 9-5) and have fun doing so, work well in a team, and can respond to new opportunities quickly. For more information on each position, please go to http://www.rockthevote.com/rtv_jobs.php. Please send resume, three references, a cover letter including salary requirements, and a writing sample to jobs@rockthevote.com.

Deputy Executive Director for Campaigns & Activism Amnesty International USA, New York

New York, NY

Amnesty International (AI) is a movement of ordinary people from across the world standing up for humanity and human rights. We investigate and expose human rights abuses, educate and mobilize the public, and help transform societies to create a safer, more just world. The DED will oversee the development of successful activist campaigns and actions, and the growth, diversification, training, and mobilization of AIUSA's activist leaders throughout the country, <http://www.idealists.org/en/job/229740-100>

Research Staff

EdSource

Mountain View, CA

Independent and impartial, EdSource studies and reports on a broad range of issues primarily at the nexus of state education policy and local K-12 school and district reforms such as school finance, accountability, student and school performance, and administrative leadership. EdSource is looking for a research staff member to complement the skills of a new senior data analyst and the senior policy analyst on staff. We are open to candidates with different kinds of degrees, experiences, and skills. For this position, an understanding of how schools and districts operate, and how state education policy relates to local reforms, will be a strong plus.

<http://www.idealists.org/en/job/229726-260>

Project Coordinator The Food Trust

Philadelphia, PA

The Food Trust is seeking energetic and committed individuals for full-time positions to implement our school-based nutrition education program. This is a unique opportunity to positively impact children's health by providing nutrition education and increased access to nutritious and affordable food in lower income communities. The Food Trust's Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the USDA's Food Stamp Program. Please visit our website at www.TheFoodTrust.org for more information. <http://www.idealists.org/en/job/229409-319>



YOUNG ELECTED OFFICIALS NETWORK STAFF

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