



PRESS RELEASE

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VFHY Awards Y Street Mini-Grants to 17 Youth Organizations *Grants will train teen volunteers to promote healthy lifestyles for youth*

RICHMOND- The [Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth \(VFHY\)](#) has awarded \$2,000 Y Street Mini-Grants to 17 youth organizations across Virginia.

Through [Y Street](#), the youth empowerment movement founded and sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, students actively apply social-marketing techniques to promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use and childhood obesity.

The FY 2010-11 Y Street recipients are:

- Appomattox County High School Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) (Appomattox)
- Blacksburg High School DECA (Blacksburg)
- Booker T. Washington High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) (Norfolk)
- Buckingham Vocational Center FBLA (Buckingham)
- Eastern Montgomery High School FCCLA (Elliston)
- Franklin County High School FCCLA (Rocky Mount)
- Galax High School FBLA (Galax)
- Hanover High School DECA (Mechanicsville)
- James River High School DECA (Midlothian, Va.)
- Mt. Vernon High School DECA and FBLA (Alexandria)
- Norfolk Tech Center FCCLA (Norfolk)
- Stone Bridge High School FBLA (Loudoun County)
- Tabb High School DECA (York County)
- Tallwood High School FBLA (Virginia Beach)
- Tazewell High School DECA (Tazewell)
- Turner Ashby High School DECA (Bridgewater)
- Woodrow Wilson High School FCCLA ()

In 2010, Y Street members created the MeltDown Campaign to raise awareness of new flavored, dissolvable tobacco products that resemble candy and mints. As a result of their efforts, the Food and Drug Administration asked VFHY to submit the results of Y

Street's MeltDown survey as part of an investigation into whether the new dissolvable products should be banned due to their appeal to teens and children. Virginia Attorney General Kenneth Cuccinelli also invited Y Street members to present their MeltDown survey findings to his office. Additionally, in 2009, Virginia Gov. Timothy Kaine and state Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Remley invited Y Street members to attend press conferences announcing Virginia's restaurant smoking ban. Y Street's 86 Campaign raised awareness of public support for smoke-free restaurants.

VFHY launched the Y Street volunteer movement for high school teens in 2004. Since then, more than 4000 teens statewide have joined the organization and attended its training sessions. (There are about 1,000 active Y Street volunteers statewide at any given time.) The Y Street Leadership Team (consisting of a core group of exceptional teen volunteers) helps develop ideas for volunteer action projects that will further Y Street's mission of educating Virginians to make healthy lifestyle choices, including preventing and reducing tobacco use.

Students in Y Street learn how to change attitudes, ideas and behaviors using strategies similar to those used by public health organizations. To influence their peers to make healthy choices, students conduct surveys, use social media to create Internet blogs, record video testimonials and host special events. Through their Y Street campaigns, students focus attention on deceptive tobacco advertising aimed at minors and encourage their peers to increase their physical fitness levels and eat a well-balanced diet. This hands-on marketing experience helps students develop civic responsibility.

More information can be found at YStreet.org or <http://ystreet.org/minigrants-2010.php>.

About the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth:

Established by the Virginia General Assembly in 1999, the **Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY)** is responsible for leading statewide efforts to prevent and reduce youth tobacco use and childhood obesity. Through VFHY's efforts, smoking among Virginia high school students decreased by more than 30 percent over the last decade, and smoking among middle school students is down by 65 percent.

VFHY directly reaches more than 141,000 children through classroom-based prevention programs in hundreds of public schools, after-school programs, community centers, daycares and prevention programs statewide. The Foundation's award-winning "Y do u think" marketing campaign delivers prevention messages to 600,000 children annually through TV and radio ads and Internet content. VFHY's creative advertising campaigns have received national attention, including AdWeek magazine's Best Commercial of the Month awards.

Formerly known as the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation, VFHY is funded through a portion of Virginia's share of the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA).

For more information about the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, please visit our website at www.HealthyYouthVa.org.

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