ACCELERATE INTO AUGUST!

Latest from Youth Leaders

Goodbye July, and hello August! Social distancing doesn’t have to mean social disengagement! As many of you prepare to kick off the year virtually from the comfort of home, there are plenty of ways for you to further the Red Cross mission through your Red Cross Club, while in a virtual world.

The National Youth Council has an array of virtual toolkits, activity guides, and tip sheets perfect for virtual engagement. We encourage you to consult our Red Cross Clubs in a Virtual Setting and Volunteering from Home activity guides which can help you plan your Red Cross year from home and brainstorm virtual Club activities. From planning virtual Club projects to partnering with Clubs across the country to host remote events, we’re here to help your Club thrive in this new environment. Your Club can continue to mobilize the power of youth and young adults from home in the Red Cross mission.

This is your time to get creative and find innovative ways to support the vital work of the American Red Cross. The National Youth Council is here to help you with any Red Cross Club related needs. Feel free to sign up for office hours to connect with any one of our Council members to discuss our virtual resources, get help planning the year, or just to chat about Red Cross youth involvement. As always, we encourage you to share your #VFH stories and events with us—tag us on Instagram or send your #VFH stories to YouthInvolvement@redcross.org.

Youth Volunteer Spotlight: Himashi Liyanarachchi

Himashi Liyanarachchi, a National Youth Council member and founder of Seminole HS Red Cross Club, recently participated in the 2020 IHL YAC Summit.

While looking for ways to increase youth involvement and impact in her community, Himashi founded her Red Cross Club at her high school & found herself jumping into IHL. As the Political Discourse Speaker for the IHL Youth Action Campaign Summit last month, Himashi was able to speak to selected members of Congress about regulations on autonomous weapons.

At her local level, due to COVID-19, Himashi ran her Club’s first IHL campaign completely virtual. Taking advantage of the poll features on Instagram stories and surveys, Himashi and her team were able to reach out to a large audience and spark conversation surrounding autonomous weapons with their community. Despite it being her Club’s first IHL campaign, her team gained new insights about International

Youth in Action for Advocacy

The International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Youth Action Campaign empowers youth and young adults to learn about international humanitarian law—the body of law that governs armed conflict.

This year, our IHL Youth Advocates created educational campaigns on the theme, Ethics of Autonomous Weapons, and conducted virtual and in-person activities to promote
awareness for IHL. At the completion of their campaigns, Advocates are selected to participate in the IHL Youth Action Campaign Virtual Summit to celebrate their accomplishments, learn from their peers’ campaigns and prepare for next year’s program the exciting, new theme, *Education in War*.

The 14-day Virtual Summit consisted of eager youth attending professional development trainings and working sessions to develop their presentations. This truly inspirational summit included guest speakers such as: Geoff Loane, from the ICRC Education Desk, Valentino Achak Deng, a lost boy from South Sudan and Founder of the VAD Foundation, Koby Langley, Senior Vice President of International Humanitarian Services and Service to the Armed Forces, Matt Bertram, Volunteer Services Vice President, and Gail J. McGovern, American Red Cross CEO.

To conclude the Virtual Summit, youth presented their campaigns to Red Cross leadership, staff, and other volunteers. The IHL team is excited and eager to kick off this year’s campaign and wants to thank all the volunteers and Advocates for continuing to spread and promote IHL. To learn more and bring this program to your community, visit redcross.org/yac.

Expand Your Knowledge

This month check out *Engaging Remote Volunteers* to learn some tips on engaging remote teams. As we continue to prepare for a virtual volunteer engagement space, the lessons in this course will help strengthen our Club virtual activities. You can access EDGE [here](#).

What is YouthWire?

Created by your National Youth Council, YouthWire is a monthly e-newsletter containing important Red Cross youth volunteer opportunities, stories, and resources for youth, young adults and youth champions! We are always looking to highlight great stories and want to hear what awesome things are happening in your region!

**Let us know what’s new for you!**

Questions about youth volunteering with the American Red Cross? Email YouthInvolvement@redcross.org

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