

**KANSAS**



**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT  
ACADEMY**

**WE'RE WORKING FOR YOUTH!  
SERVING YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES IN KANSAS**



## OUR MISSION

**TO EDUCATE, MENTOR, AND  
SUPPORT YOUTH WITH  
DISABILITIES TO BE  
CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS  
OF THEIR COMMUNITY.**

# OUR HISTORY



## IT ALL STARTED WITH ONE PROGRAM...

In 2001 the first Kansas Youth Leadership Forum (KSYLF) was held. After hosting five successful forums, it became apparent that additional programs for transition-age youth were needed. In 2005 a statewide, non-profit organization called the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEА) was established to house the KSYLF and other programs that empower young people with disabilities (ages 5-25). Youth with disabilities helped start KYEA and they continue to be the core of the organization. Not only are KYEA programs directed towards youth with disabilities, but the organization is youth-driven and youth are involved in decision making for the organization. In order to encourage involvement from all youth, KYEA programs are free to all participants.



# KANSAS YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

## A WEEK LONG LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

**WHAT:** The KSYLF is an intense, motivating five day forum in which a selected group of high school students with disabilities stay on a college campus to learn about leadership, career options, advocacy, goal setting, and much more. Delegates learn through speakers, hands-on activities, and exposure to successful adults with disabilities.

**WHO:** Approximately 25-30 high school juniors and seniors from across the state are chosen to participate each year. Applicants must possess an interest or potential for leadership. KSYLF is open to students with any type of disability.

**ACTIVITIES:** Large group sessions with speakers, small group sessions, resource fair, Real Life Affair, Day at the Capitol, barbecue, adapted recreation, mentor luncheon, talent show, and a dance!



# EMPOWER ME! SERIES

## BRINGING REAL WORLD TOPICS TO YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH WEEKEND WORKSHOPS

**WHAT:** The Empower Me! series brings real life topics to youth with disabilities in their own cities! Participants spend the day with KYEA staff learning in a very interactive environment. Each day-long, weekend workshop focuses on one topic and includes discussion, speakers, activities, prizes, and more. Workshop sessions include:

- **Surviving High School:** Tools for getting through the ups and downs of high school!
- **Now Hiring:** We all want a paycheck... find out how to get one!
- **It's My Life:** Learn how to take charge of your life and live independently!
- **Relationships 411:** Learn how to create safe and happy relationships in all areas of your life!

**WHO/WHERE:** Empower Me! workshops are open to youth with disabilities up to age 25. KYEA brings this series to various cities throughout the state (*see KYEA website for schedule*).



# INTERNS CREATING OPPORTUNITIES NOW

## GAINING EMPLOYMENT SKILLS THROUGH DIRECT INTERNSHIPS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

**WHAT:** The Interns Creating Opportunities Now (ICON) program is a learning and working experience. Young people with disabilities gain employment skills and knowledge through a paid internship at KYEA or participating centers for independent living throughout the state. These internships involve assisting with programs and projects, which gives interns real life job experiences. Each internship also includes a learning component where interns are expected to complete exploration tasks on employment topics such as time management, office etiquette, dress attire, communication, and more. Each ICON internship is five months long.

**WHO:** An ICON intern must be a youth with a disability between the ages of 14 and 25 who has a desire to work.



# COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS



## PROMOTING ACCEPTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING THROUGH COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

**WHAT:** KYEA travels the entire state working to educate Kansans of all ages through a variety of presentations. Does your group need some education on any of the topics below? Then contact us, and we've got a speaker for you! Our staff have the experience, knowledge, and passion to speak on a variety of topics related to disability awareness and empowerment.

**AUDIENCES:** All KYEA presentations are interactive and informative! Each presentation is adjusted to fit the specific audience. KYEA has experience speaking to audiences of ALL ages. Our presentations can be beneficial for people with AND without disabilities. Audiences can include staff trainings, business and civic group meetings, school classrooms, and more.

### PRESENTATION TOPICS:

- **Disability Awareness and Etiquette:** Covers various disability etiquette topics such as proper language, team building, interaction, personal stories, and much more! Learn more about awareness and how to interact with people who have disabilities.



- **Disability History:** Topics include disability heritage, culture, and the struggles and triumphs that mark our history. Learn what leaders, laws, and movements paved the road to the freedom of our future.
- **Advocacy:** Gain the skills needed to advocate in all areas of life! Learn how to voice your needs to those around you and support the needs of others.
- **Self-Esteem:** Audiences explore their level of self-esteem and how THEY can be proud! Learn how self-esteem can make a difference in your personal, professional, and educational experiences, as well as on your overall health.
- **Goal Setting:** Focuses on the importance of goal setting, as well as the process of setting a goal. Audience members think about their ideal future, develop a plan, and begin to explore the path to each chosen goal.
- **Youth Leadership and Empowerment:** Can people with disabilities be leaders? Learn the traits of a leader, various forms of leadership, and how to be a positive influence in your community.
- **Other Topics:** Independent Living, Community Service, Sharing of Personal Stories, etc.

**BOOK YOUR PRESENTATION TODAY!**



# DISABILITY EDUCATION IN KS SCHOOLS

## BRINGING DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS INTO OUR SCHOOLS

In 2009 KYEA advocated for the passage of a Disability Awareness and History Bill in Kansas. This law states that all schools in Kansas are encouraged to set aside a period of time each year to teach disability awareness and history to students with and without disabilities in all classrooms. The law aims to recognize the importance of people with disabilities in our history, create more acceptance and understanding amongst all students, and reduce bullying. KYEA continues to promote disability education in KS schools through:

- Promoting this law to the schools and assisting them with resources
- Assisting schools with planning for activities related to disability education
- Providing disability awareness and heritage presentations to schools throughout the state
- Providing disability education resources on our website

**CELEBRATE DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS WEEK DURING THE THIRD WEEK OF OCTOBER!**



# MENTORING MATTERS

## EXPOSURE TO CAREER OPTIONS THROUGH JOB SHADOWING OPPORTUNITIES

**WHAT:** Mentoring DOES matter, and we are bringing a very unique mentoring opportunity to the youth of our state! The Mentoring Matters program provides short term mentoring relationships to youth with disabilities in the form of one or more job shadowing experiences. The youth choose the career that they are most interested in, and KYEA sets up a job shadowing opportunity in their community. The experience can occur at any point in the year. We work around each participant's schedule. Youth can choose to job shadow multiple times in order to learn about different careers.

**WHO:** Any youth with a disability, between the ages of 13 and 25, can participate in Mentoring Matters. Job shadowing can be arranged in any city in Kansas.



# OTHER SERVICES

## AND THAT'S NOT ALL...

KYEA also provides a variety of other services to young people with disabilities on their road to becoming contributing members of the community.

### **Empowerment Planning**

Need help with reaching a goal? KYEA can provide support, ideas, and resources to youth on the path to accomplishing a goal. We can even meet one-on-one with youth to create their own, self-authored empowerment plan complete with steps, a timeline, and resources. If you have a goal, we can help you reach it!

### **Youth Volunteer Opportunities**

KYEA has a lot to accomplish each day and oftentimes we need your help to do it. We welcome volunteers for various opportunities throughout the year and in various cities throughout the state. We especially welcome young people with disabilities to volunteer with us. Opportunities can include assistance during programs, updating our website with the latest news, presenting in schools to recruit youth, writing an article for each newsletter, and much more. Need some volunteer hours? Come help out at KYEA! We also welcome adult volunteers and volunteers without disabilities.

## **Advocacy**

KYEA staff are available to serve as advocates in one-on-one or group situations. KYEA also stays up-to-date on important bills related to young people with disabilities.

## **Information and Referral**

KYEA provides information on community resources and works to connect youth and their families to the appropriate organization in any given situation. KYEA also maintains an extensive list of resources on our website. Resource topics include independent living, education, employment, self-esteem, transition issues, state and national disability initiatives, and more.

## **State and National Partnerships and Involvement**

KYEA maintains formal and informal partnerships with state and national organizations. This leads to involvement in various conferences and community activities. By being involved, KYEA then passes along news and opportunities to youth in Kansas in various ways.

## **E-Newsletters**

Get the latest news, updates, and opportunities for youth with disabilities in Kansas all in one place. Subscribe to the KYEA bi-monthly e-newsletter!

***Be sure to check out our website and Facebook page  
to view new and upcoming programs!***

## REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION

Are you interested in KYEA's mission and programs? Do you need more information on something that you have seen in our brochure? Then send in this request for more information, and we will contact you!

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to know more about the KYEA mission.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to know more about the following program(s):

Please list: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to participate in the following program(s):

Please list: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering my time for KYEA.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like more information about donating to KYEA.

I am a (*circle one*): YOUTH    PARENT    SERVICE PROVIDER    OTHER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please send this card to: KYEA, 517 SW 37th St, Ste. B, Topeka, KS 66611***





CONTACT US

**KANSAS YOUTH  
EMPOWERMENT ACADEMY (KYEA)**

**517 SW 37TH ST., SUITE B  
TOPEKA, KS 66611**



**785.215.6655 LOCAL  
785.215.6698 TTY  
866.577.5932 TOLL FREE  
785.215.6699 FAX**



**[WWW.KYEA.ORG](http://WWW.KYEA.ORG)**

**VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!**

**[FACEBOOK.COM/KANSASYEA](https://FACEBOOK.COM/KANSASYEA) ~ [TWITTER.COM/KANSASYEA](https://TWITTER.COM/KANSASYEA)**



*The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy is made possible  
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