

# Program Goals

**Created** in 1999 by an international committee of young leaders active in human rights, we draw our inspiration from the belief that youth involvement in human rights is one of the best ways to prevent and minimize conflict, help heal divided communities, and ensure basic respect for human dignity.

## Goals

- Increase understanding of the context and practice of human rights among the world's youth
- Facilitate cross-cultural understanding and dialogue, encourage critical thinking and analysis, and engage in joint problem-solving on pressing human rights issues
- Foster personal and emotional growth among youth, explore how the choices they make affect the lives of others, and find positive outlets to serve
- Build the skills, knowledge, and confidence of youth to raise awareness, take action and work collaboratively with governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders



# For More Information

## Global Youth Connect

P.O. Box 1342  
New York, NY 10159-1342

Tel: (845) 657-3273

E-mail: [contact@globalyouthconnect.org](mailto:contact@globalyouthconnect.org)  
[www.globalyouthconnect.org](http://www.globalyouthconnect.org)



# Global Youth Connect

Empowering  
Youth To  
Advance  
Human Rights  
And Create  
a More  
Just World



**Global Youth Connect  
Inspires, Supports,  
and Connects Youth  
to Act Together  
for Compassion,  
Human Rights  
and Responsibility.**

**GYC builds and supports** a community of youth from around the world who actively promote and protect human rights, and educate and inspire the next generation to work for peaceful change.

**We believe** that educated, compassionate and empowered youth from different backgrounds are the key to achieving tolerance, peace and justice. Our programs encourage young people to work together cross-culturally to stand up to abuses of human rights. GYC practices a holistic approach to youth education and action which is grounded in a commitment to the principles of human rights, community-building, reconciliation and peaceful resolution of conflicts.



## Major Program Activities

**GYC's Human Rights Learning and Action Communities (LACs)** are a unique, first-hand opportunity for young leaders to cross cultural boundaries and learn about the reality of human rights in a complex and increasingly globalized world, as well as to act together for positive change.

In each LAC, **young human rights activists** from a host country (like Rwanda or the USA) are joined by a **human rights delegation** of young activists from other parts of the world for two to three weeks. During that time, they work together to develop common frameworks of understanding, enhance their knowledge of human rights, strengthen their leadership skills, build supportive peer relationships, and develop or assist with collaborative projects to address issues of peace, justice and human rights.

### Each LAC weaves together four core activities:

- a cross-cultural human rights training workshop
- hands-on fieldwork projects with grassroots organizations
- site visits with a variety of stakeholders
- documentation/reporting

### GYC Alumni Village:

We encourage past program participants to stay connected with each other and to engage in the same kind of cross-boundary dialogue that began face to face during their LAC, to receive more training, and to get involved in GYC leadership roles. An all-alumni GYC Village Council works in collaboration with GYC Staff to create newsletters, discussion boards, and networking opportunities between alumni who may never have met, but who have at least one thing in common: a GYC experience.

## Accomplishments & Future Plans

**Rwanda:** Ten Learning and Action Communities, 2006 - 2010, each in partnership with local NGOs, serving over 300 young leaders through human rights trainings, site visits and fieldwork projects. Focus on: Conflict Resolution, Juvenile Justice, LGBT Rights, Children's Rights, Domestic Violence Prevention, Health Care, Marginalized Groups, Promotion of the Arts as a tool for promoting and protecting human rights.

**Bosnia:** Five human rights delegations and Learning Community Workshops to date, in collaboration with the Center for Peacebuilding (in Sanski Most), serving over 100 International and Bosnian Youth. Focus on Conflict Resolution, Children's Rights, Women's Rights. Great emphasis on building International understanding and collaboration.

**Nepal:** Conducted a visit to Nepal in 2001 to learn about the plight of former bonded laborers in collaboration with Backward Society Education (BASE). Hosted a learning community workshop in 2007 with facilitators from Bosnia and Rwanda, the USA, and Nepal, providing young activists with training on human rights, conflict resolution, community organizing, fundraising and other skills.

**Other Countries:** Learning and Action Communities in Guatemala, El Salvador, Cambodia, and Venezuela, serving over 200 local and international young activists and 20 grassroots organizations.

**Human Rights in the U.S.:** Hosted a Global Human Rights Learning Community Workshop for young human rights defenders from 8 different countries. Sponsored Side Event on Youth and Armed Conflict for 40 UN Youth Delegates in 2009. Various presentations about issues in countries where GYC has run programs. Fundraising for partner organizations in need. We are currently planning a LAC in NYC in 2011, with youth from around the city, and (pending funding) from around the world.