

LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNOUNCES 2023-2024 MEMBERS

Some of Louisiana's most outstanding students have been selected as new members of the Louisiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) and will work together over the next year in an effort to influence the legislative process and make the state a better place for young people.

A new council is selected annually and is composed entirely of high school students to address issues affecting the youth of Louisiana. The Louisiana Commission on Civic Education oversees LYAC's activities.

Now in its sixteenth year, LYAC gives students the opportunity to be involved in the workings of state government. LYAC members have the opportunity to study, meet with elected officials, and propose legislation to be considered in the upcoming regular session.

Members of the council are selected from around the state and must display a strong interest in civic involvement and leadership. These 31 students are dynamic, well-rounded individuals that go through a rigorous selection process. Three top scoring students serve from each of the six congressional districts.

The remaining at-large members are top scores from all districts combined. The members must be in grades nine through twelve and enrolled in a public, private, or charter high school or participating in a home study program.

Members of the 2023-2024 Legislative Youth Advisory Council

Congressional District 1

Chance McComiskey	Christ Episcopal School
Krista Miller	Mandeville High School
Neal Tandon	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies

Congressional District 2

Maria English	Academy of the Sacred Heart New Orleans
Elsie Poynter	Benjamin Franklin High School
Dylan Rhoton	Brother Martin High School

Congressional District 3

Arun Cacodcar	Episcopal School of Acadiana
Spencer Croft	Lafayette High School
Lucille Kincade	Central Catholic High School

Congressional District 4

Olivia Ostendorff	Loyola College Prep
Kate Shaw	C.E. Byrd High School
Vivienne Webb	Caddo Magnet High School

Congressional District 5

Joe Lewis	Winnfield Senior High School
Easton Smith	Franklinton High School
Loralie Smith	River Oaks School

Congressional District 6

Emma Bonney	St. Joseph's Academy
Michelle Lee	Baton Rouge Magnet High School
Benjamin Ray	Walker High School

At-Large Members

Samuel Adjei	University Laboratory School
Avery Aymond	Port Barre High School
Rylee Beaudion	Alexandria Senior High School
Phoebe Fannin	Zachary High School
Sarah Heebe	Metairie Park Country Day School
Analyce Jeane	North Caddo Magnet High School
Vaishnavi Kumbala	Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies
Shashank Nanjundiah	Baton Rouge Magnet High School
Holly Phan	Baton Rouge Magnet High School
Riley Quinlan	C.E. Byrd High School
Logan Schexnider	Beau Chene High School
Lauryn Smith	Varnado High School
Lauren Wiltz	Academy of the Sacred Heart Grand Coteau

2023 LYAC Members' Bios

Samuel Adjei is a senior at the University Laboratory School in Baton Rouge. He serves as treasurer of the ULS National Honors Society and has served as the secretary of the Student Council for three consecutive years. Samuel will also be presenting his research on the Effects of Ambient Air Pollution on the Migratory Behaviors of Birds at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and at the London Youth International Science Forum. Samuel frequently supports his community through his involvement in the Beta Club and the National Honor Society. Furthermore, Samuel volunteers at the Knock Knock Children's Museum, where he helps aspiring young minds develop and learn through various interactive activities. Last year, Samuel Adjei worked with the LYAC team to create a bill that safeguards Louisiana students by requiring schools to create and implement detailed school intruder safety drills specifically during times of disarray (like lunch periods and periods in-between classes). This year, Samuel will continue to maximize student and parent access to academic, vocational, and professional opportunities as a member of LYAC.

Avery Aymond lives in the small town of Krotz Springs and is a rising junior at Port Barre High School, located in St. Landry Parish. She is the treasurer of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) where she has served as an active member for the last two years. Last year, Avery and a fellow member advanced to the FBLA National Convention held in Chicago, IL, in website design. This summer, she will again be participating in the FBLA National Convention

in social media strategies. In addition to FBLA, Avery is an active club member in both Senior Beta and Student Council. She has participated in countless service activities associated with both of these clubs. In addition to clubs, Avery serves as a member of the PBHS sports medicine team. Avery is an honor roll student enrolled in as many honors and AP courses as her schedule allows. In June, she will be enrolled in the LSUE Academy, where she will be dual enrolling in classes on the campus of Louisiana State University at Eunice. She is taking advantage of the opportunity to explore a variety of studies and has chosen to major in general studies. This opportunity will allow her to earn an associate's degree while simultaneously earning her high school diploma. Avery has a passion for helping others and plans to pursue a career that will allow her to advocate for social justice and equity for all. She is also passionate about the current state of youth social and emotional health. Avery is excited for the opportunity to serve on the LYAC and hopes her role will allow her to advocate for both equity and mental health for her peers.

Rylee Beaudion is a senior at Alexandria Senior High School in Alexandria. She is serving her second term as a LYAC member. She is a member of many organizations inside and outside of school. She has served on the Student Council since middle school where she has served as the President. She is currently her class Secretary. She has been a part of the Beta Club where she held the position of Secretary. She is the Captain of her high school danceline. Outside of school, she is a member of the Youth Usher Association (President), Delta Youth Academy, National Honor Society for Dance Art (Secretary), and Jack and Jill of America Alexandria Teen Chapter (President). She is committed to decreasing teen violence and murders within her community and state as a member of LYAC.

Emma Bonney is a senior at St. Joseph's Academy in Baton Rouge. She is the President of the Respect Life Club at St. Joseph's Academy, a leader in Student Ministry, and a secretary for the Historical and Geographical Society. She is an active volunteer at the Women's New Life Clinic in Baton Rouge and the Greater Baton Rouge Foodbank. She is the President Pro Tempore in YMCA's Youth Legislature conference, and was recently voted Outstanding Delegate at YMCA's Model United Nations conference. She hopes to work with her peers on human rights issues plaguing Louisiana, mainly Cancer Alley and the criminal justice system, as a member of LYAC.

Arun Cacodcar is a junior at the Episcopal School of Acadiana in Lafayette. In addition to serving as Class Treasurer, Arun is actively involved in Mu Alpha Theta, Youth & Government, and his school's swim team. Arun is a member of the Brent Henley Youth Leadership Program, which pairs young people to serve on a local nonprofit organization's board. As part of LYAC, Arun looks forward to addressing our state's worsening child literacy crisis.

Spencer Croft represents District 3 and is a rising sophomore at Lafayette High School in Lafayette. He is in the gifted program taking AP and gifted classes and maintains a 4.0 GPA. He is an Eagle Scout and currently serves in the leadership position of Senior Patrol Leader overseeing nineteen scouts. He has earned fifty-nine merit badges, the most in troop history. Spencer has performed over seventy-five hours of community service for his troop working on Eagle projects, making smores with senior citizens, and countless hours with his local Knight of Columbus Organization. He has earned the Pillars of Faith Religious Emblem, a recognition

awarded for earning all four Catholic Religious Emblems. He is an active member of St. Pius Church where he will make his confirmation next year. His Eagle Project was the construction and installation of six wood duck boxes at the Acadiana Park Nature Station where he focused on the reintroduction of wood ducks into the local ecosystem. Spencer has taken piano for eleven years and has earned Superior at Piano Technique Tournament each year. He is a current member of Lafayette Mayor Josh Guillory's Youth Advisory Council and serves on the Community Outreach Committee. At Lafayette High, Spencer currently participates in Alpha Omega Bible Study, Science Olympiad and Turning Point USA where he serves as secretary. He has been a competitive swimmer with COLA for the last four years. He also competes on the Lafayette High swim team and last year, got Top 15 in the District. As a member of LYAC, Spencer hopes to understand and participate in the legislative process in order to focus on issues that are truly important to his state and community. Such as the deteriorating educational infrastructure and improving Louisiana education to be competitive with the rest of the nation and world. He also feels that it is imperative to address free speech issues in public education. He is looking forward to working with his peers from across the state to achieve a better future for Louisiana students.

Maria English is a senior at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans. She is the high school Executive Board President, as well as a member of both the Varsity Cross Country and Tennis teams, the latter of which secured a State runner-up title in 2022 and a Regional championship title in 2023. She is the Vice-President of the Network Student Advisory Committee, a national body of representatives for the Sacred Heart schools throughout the United States, which fosters community and service across the country. She is active in her parish's Catholic Youth Organization and serves as a representative for her school. She is committed to leadership and service and is looking forward to using her leadership skills to inspire students to learn more about the needs of youth in Louisiana, notably a need to improve education and school resources.

Phoebe Fannin is an upcoming sophomore at Zachary High School in Zachary. She is a member of her school's quiz bowl and mock trial teams. In the 2023-2024 school year, she will be a Beta Club officer and the captions editor for the Zachary High yearbook. In 2021, Phoebe placed first nationally in the social studies competition for her grade at the National Beta Convention. Last summer, she created a podcast that highlights various career fields, called Curious Careers. As a part of that podcast, she interviewed many different people, including a Foreign Service Officer and an ABC News contributor. She hopes to add a new season to her podcast each summer. Phoebe is passionate about government and politics and would like to use her time in LYAC to find solutions to problems, especially problems that are of interest to teenagers.

Sarah Heebe is a senior at Metairie Park Country Day School in Metairie. Sarah was elected Student Body President, previously serving as Treasurer of the Executive Board and Class President. She is a leader of the Model UN and Mock Legislature clubs. Additionally, Sarah volunteers at Bricolage Academy as a trained literacy tutor. At Country Day, Sarah is a member of both the National Honor Society and the Cum Laude Society. She received three gold medals

in the National Spanish Exam and came in first place for American history in district three at the state literary rally. Also, Sarah has played the trumpet for nine years in honors and school jazz bands. Sarah is excited to expand her platform to promote educational equity and literacy while with LYAC and as well as to continue her work to bolster school safety from last year.

Analyce Jeane is a senior at North Caddo Magnet High School in Vivian. Analyce serves as the vice president of the Interact Service club, is a delegate, and has served as second vice president of the student council, and treasurer of the senior class. She co-founded and serves as the promotional advisor of the school's chapter of P7, a Christian club that encourages connection through student-led devotions. In addition to selection for the Gateway Gifted Program for Academic giftedness, she is dual-enrolled in the talented arts program for both theater and music and is an accomplished pianist and singer. She is currently considered a full-time college student as she is working to complete her associate degree before her high school graduation by taking a rigorous dual-enrollment schedule. Recently inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, the national community college honor society. Analyce attended Teen Pact, an intense weeklong governmental training at the State Capitol. She serves in the Teen Advisory Council of Northwest Louisiana, which is a bridge between regional school boards and teens. Analyce was selected for a national program called Student Leadership Counsel, which is a veteran's service organization. She was the first high school student to receive the Community Service Award presented by the local chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution for her hometown community involvement. One of her greatest passions and accomplishments is a fundraising campaign she founded called "Cupcakes for a Cure" in which she bakes, decorates, and sells gourmet cupcakes during October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. All profits are donated to the mammography foundation of the North Caddo Medical Center hospital in Vivian to aid in purchasing models and equipment for breast cancer screenings. Outside of school involvement, Analyce is actively involved in a variety of extracurricular activities, from committing her time to her church's First Impression Hospitality Team, Music Team, and Children's Ministry to the Media Team and Catalyst Youth Ministry. She is a servant leader. She has been selected as part of the Louisiana Allstate Youth Choir for the past three years. During her summers, she volunteers for a weeklong kids' camp and performs a drama in front of an audience of more than two thousand people. Analyce is extremely thankful to be given the opportunity to be a part of LYAC and looks forward to representing the youth of Louisiana.

Lucille Kincade is an upcoming sophomore at Central Catholic High School in Morgan City. She is a member of the student council where she currently serves as class president. She is also the Beta club president. Lucille has competed in the speech category for National Beta club. She is a tri-sport athlete, competing on the varsity basketball, track, and dance teams. She helped lead her basketball team to the state semi-finals this year. Lucille is also working to get a debate team started at her school. When she's not competing in sports, she is often found volunteering around her community. Lucille is currently working to start a youth center in her town. This was her winning idea for the New Generations competition. She has competed in the New Generations competition since eighth grade. During the summer, Lucille helps at her church's Vacation Bible School summer camp. Outside of academic and athletic pursuits, Lucille's hobbies include

baking, playing basketball, and reading new novels. She hopes to use LYAC to be a voice and outlet for students of smaller towns in Louisiana that may not have many opportunities to be heard in legislature.

Vaishnavi Kumbala is a junior at Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies in Metairie. She is the editor-in-chief and founder of her school's newspaper. She will also serve as an eco/soc presiding officer on Louisiana's Model UN State Board and as President of Haynes' Future Business Leaders of America and National English Honor Society Organizations. Her writing has won various regional, state, and national awards and was published in *The New York Times*, *Teen Vogue*, and *The New Orleans Advocate*. Additionally, Vaishnavi is involved with her school's Academic Games team and has won multiple national champion titles. Vaishnavi is passionate about mental health awareness and providing more resources for teenagers and has discussed youth mental health with local and national leaders. She served as a Leadership Team Member of the Louisiana Student Behavior, Mental Health, and Discipline Task Force where she represented students across Louisiana. Her app, which aims to expand mental health resources, was showcased at the U.S. Capitol and won the LA-01 Congressional App Challenge. As a second-year member of LYAC, Vaishnavi hopes to continue working with her peers to bring more mental health awareness and provide more resources to help students across the state.

Michelle Lee is a junior at Baton Rouge Magnet High School. Where she is the founding-president of the Animal Rights Preservation club and the Youth Government secretary. She loves participating in BETA club through scrapbooking, tutoring kids at the library, attending state convention, and placing third in digital art. She helped start a Pet Supply Drive this year. She is also a current member in Speech and Debate, French Honors Society, and NHS. Outside of school, she enjoys using digital art and painting to run her small stationary business to spread awareness about the environment. Michelle is excited to be a member of the Louisiana Youth Advisory Council and to collaborate with other peers on environmental concerns and help impoverished communities in Louisiana.

Joe Lewis is a rising freshman from Winnfield Senior High School in Winnfield. He is President of Winnfield Middle School 7/8th grade 4-H club, Quizbowl team captain, and Community Outreach Youth Group president. He serves as Winn Parish's 8th grade Student of the Year and a zone finalist. He has won awards in the state 4-H and Beta club. He has played the piano for five years and plays in a recital yearly. He is passionate about civil rights, equality, and the advancement of Louisiana. He hopes to work with fellow LYAC members and legislators to give a voice to youth and help make Louisiana a better place.

Chance McComiskey is a senior at Christ Episcopal School in Covington. He is president of the Student Council and captain of the basketball team. He is involved in many other clubs and runs a nonprofit called *Everyday Finance Northshore* that helps provide basic financial literacy skills to junior high and high school students in underserved communities, and he created a blog and media presence focusing on economic inequality in Louisiana. Chance has written and published a book on the role of residential segregation in the subprime mortgage crisis and its impact on

the American South, and he is interested in working with the rest of the council on economic issues including housing and residential policy.

Krista Miller is an upcoming senior at Mandeville High School. She is president of Mandeville's Youth and Government, secretary of National Honors Society, and has served as treasurer of Mandeville High's executive board. She works as a sales associate at Ann Taylor Loft and will be working as a page for the House of Representatives in the upcoming legislative session. She is also a counselor for Louisiana's Association of Student Councils and strongly values leadership. She is excited to bring her experiences and goals to LYAC, and to work with other members to make an impact on her state and represent the voice of her peers!

Shashank Nanjundiah is a senior at Baton Rouge Magnet High School. He is Vice President of the Geopolitical Club at BRMHS, and is the co-founder and ex-Vice President of the BRMHS Music Production Club. He is an active member of the BRMHS BETA Club, the BRMHS Mu Alpha Theta chapter, the BRMHS Science Olympiad team, and the Louisiana Envirothon. While in middle school, his team placed 2nd in Book Battle in the 2019 Junior Beta State Convention, and he placed 2nd in the ELA competition in the 2020 Junior Beta State Convention. He received an AP Scholar award in 2022. He has also received a school award for his academic performance in AP Music Theory in 2023. He qualified for the final Math Bowl round during the 2023 Mu Alpha Theta State Convention in 2023. He has qualified for and participated in the Louisiana District Rally, and qualified for and participated in the Louisiana State Rally for American History in 2023. He has worked with LYAC before on projects ranging from school violence prevention to juvenile justice. He enjoys reading, writing, making music, swimming, playing tennis, and researching topics that interest him, such as fluid dynamics, robotics, and cryptography. He hopes to collaborate with his peers on various educational initiatives, bring attention to the most crucial shortcomings of the state's transportation system, and participate in relations between citizens and the government as a returning member of LYAC.

Olivia Ostendorff is a sophomore at Loyola College Prep in Shreveport. Olivia is the rising Junior Class President and a varsity cheerleader, as well as a member of the National Honor Society, Student Government Association, Key Club, and class representative for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. She is a member of the Community Foundation of Northwestern Louisiana Teen Advisory Committee and a weekly volunteer at a local community outreach nonprofit, Community Renewal, in a Friendship House. She is also a runner at local law firm, Bradley Murchison Kelly and Shea. As a member of LYAC, Olivia hopes to highlight a need for a greater sense of community in the present social media culture, as well as the importance of social programs and other organizations in Louisiana that reach out to those in need of various resources.

Holly Phan is a junior at Baton Rouge Magnet High School. She is a returning member of LYAC and was a part of the winning I2P Team for the council's game, "Let's Talk." She has served as her sophomore class secretary and junior class president. Holly is also active in Mu Alpha Theta where she served as co-historian. In the fall, she will serve as the Mu Alpha Theta State Board

Corresponding Secretary. She has also placed in various individual and team events in MAO tournaments across the state including leading the winning scrapbook and banner team. Holly has also participated in the LSU State Science & Engineering Fair where she won first in the category of Social Sciences for her project on how education affects organ donation registration. As a member of her school's BETA club, she competed in the BETA state convention, placing in the category Fiber Arts and qualifying for nationals the past two years. Holly is passionate about issues regarding education and hopes to work for increased equality in her home district and across the state, and overall better her community.

Elsie Poynter is a rising sophomore at Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans. She has served as a freshman representative on the Student Advocacy Board, a branch of the student council. She will continue to serve on the board next year as a sophomore. She is also a writer for the Franklin newspaper, and will be leading a new branch of the BFHS media association that will create magazines, showcasing in-depth and long form writing content, as well as an emphasis on innovative design and captivating visuals. Additionally, Elsie played a role in reviving Mission Ignition, a program under United-Way designed to engage young people in serving toward the eradication of poverty, which had been inactive for a period due to the Covid-19 pandemic. She served as a student board member in this program and participated in numerous volunteer events. She is also fluent in French. She was granted the DELF B2 Diploma by the French Ministry of National Education, participated in the French National Contest, and was awarded a gold medal, placing her in the top 5% of all national French learners of the same level. She was awarded the 2023 *Prix d'Excellence* from L'Union Francaise for enthusiasm, achievement, and excellence in the study of French language and culture, with an emphasis on oral communication. Elsie is passionate about advocating for her beliefs. On LYAC, she hopes to work with other students and legislators to advocate for youth voices and educational equity.

Riley Quinlan is an upcoming senior at C. E. Byrd High School in Shreveport. There, she is Senior Representative in Astra Club and Sergeant-At-Arms for the Youth and Government Club. She is also a member of Top Jackets, National Honor Society, First Priority, Z-Club, and Gayarre History Club. Riley was voted Events/Outreach Committee Chair for the Providence House Youth Advisory Council this year, and also received the Silver Academic Key for volunteer hours through NHS. She spends her free time coaching both Christus Louisiana Aquatics Club and Pierremont Oaks Tennis Club swim teams, playing piano and guitar, and enjoying the outdoors. She is excited to participate in this committee and hopes to be able to bring perspectives concerning mental health in students and environmental preservation to the LYAC.

Benjamin Ray is a junior at Walker High School in Walker. He has achieved his 1st degree black belt with Inspired ATA and is currently training for his 2nd degree. This year, he obtained a State Championship title and has been invited to attend the ATA District Competition in Dallas, Texas. He is also a sergeant with JROTC Marine Corps at Walker High School. This year, he achieved awards in Civic Service, Longevity and Fidelity and Physical Achievement. He was also voted cadet of the month among his peers. Through these programs, Benjamin has been

given an opportunity to give back to his community by volunteering his time and skills. During his time with LYAC, he hopes to work with his peers by focusing on mental health in today's youth as well as bullying.

Dylan Rhoton is a rising senior at Brother Martin High School in New Orleans. He currently serves as the National Student Delegate President of Mu Alpha Theta National Mathematics Honor Society and the Secretary-Treasurer of Louisiana MAΘ. This year, he was recognized by the Scholastic Writing Competition, earning regional and national recognition for his critical essay concerning the eradication of no-knock warrants. Dylan was also selected as a finalist for the 2022 US Senate Youth Program, participated in the Louisiana BAR Association's 2022 Suit Up Summer Internship, and was awarded "Most Likely to Succeed" at the 2022 Louisiana Youth Seminar. He was recently elected the Treasurer of the Southeast Louisiana Youth Council, a Kiwanis service organization, and the Vice President of the Brother Martin Student Council. Dylan placed second overall in American History at State Literary Rally and placed first in the Advanced Math area test at Mu Alpha Theta State Convention. On LYAC, Dylan looks forward to representing Congressional District 2 and Brother Martin High School while addressing the pressing needs of Louisiana youth, including gun violence and social media companies' influence on teenage minds.

Logan Schexnider is a freshman student at Beau Chene High School in Arnaudville who has completed a year of its honors program, known as OAKS (Order of Academic Kinship and Success). Logan claims many academic and leadership accomplishments, such as Student of the Year and entry into St. Landry Parish's Gifted Program. He is currently a member of Beau Chene's Student Council and demonstrates a wide breadth of knowledge across many subjects through competitions such as State Rally, which placed him as the third most knowledgeable student of American Government in the state. By collaborating with like-minded peers in LYAC, Logan hopes to unveil and combat issues experienced by Louisiana youth today, as well as gaining knowledge about the workings of government for a future career in Law.

Kate Shaw is a junior at C.E. Byrd High School in Shreveport. She is the Secretary of State for the Louisiana Youth Legislative Conference Board. She is also the president of the Providence House Youth Advisory Council, which works with the local homeless shelter to raise awareness for homelessness and to get high schoolers involved with volunteering. At Byrd, she is the editor of the yearbook and literary magazine and is the Vice President of Key Club and Beta Club. She is a three-time recipient of the Presidential Service Award and has won an Award of Excellence from the National Council of Teachers of English for a piece written on the struggles of rural education. She is excited to work with LYAC and hopes to confront issues regarding education in underserved communities.

Loralie Smith is a Junior at River Oaks School in Monroe. She is a 4.0 National Honor Society student, part of the River Oaks Interact Club and a member of the VarsityTrack and Varsity Cheerleading where she is a two-time UCA All-American Cheerleader. Loralie has been a local teen titleholder for the Miss Louisiana Organization for four years where she spreads Autism

awareness through her Community Service Initiative Not a Puzzle: Autism Acceptance. She is a Cadet Aiman in the General Claire L. Chennault Composite Squadron of the Louisiana Wing Civil Air Patrol. Loralie has over one hundred documented volunteer hours with various focuses including the Northeast Louisiana Autism Society, Northeast Louisiana Food Bank, and the Cinderella Project of Monroe. As a member of LYAC, she aims to collaborate with fellow students on diverse initiatives, highlighting the influence of youth in our state.

Easton Smith is a sophomore at Franklinton High School in Washington Parish. Easton is active in his school and community. At FHS, Easton is a member of the Washington Parish Youth Coalition, National Honor Society, BETA, Student Council and 4H. Athletically, he represents FHS on the Demon Football, Soccer, Tennis, and Powerlifting teams. Easton recently earned a trip to Washington, DC, to attend the National CADCA conference through his community work with the Washington Parish Youth Coalition that focuses on substance abuse. Easton looks forward to working with his peers on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council on various initiatives. He hopes to be part of an initiative concerning substance abuse with a specific focus on the fentanyl epidemic. Easton is excited about extending his knowledge on issues concerning the youth in Louisiana and collaborating with his peers and the legislature to make Louisiana an even greater state to call home.

Lauryn Smith is an upcoming Senior at Varnado High School in Washington Parish. She is the President of Varnado High School FFA Club, Area IV FFA, and National Technical Honor Society. However, more actively, Lauryn serves as Student Council President. She is a member of Beta, National Honor Society, and Key Club. Outside of school, she is a member of the Intercultural Circle Organization where she serves as the African American female. Outside of school, Lauryn is a member of Spartentees Service Club and the vice president of Brilliant Mindz Nonprofit Organization and works part time at the community center. State Representative Malinda White and Senator Beth Mizell recognized Lauryn as an amazing speaker after testifying on behalf of SB 207 during the last session. She is passionate about creating resources for the community. As a second-year member of LYAC, she hopes to bring attention to access to resources that can help improve her community, she to pass more bills, and network more with Louisiana officials.

Neal Tandon is a junior at Haynes Academy in Metairie. He is the Vice President of the High School Democrats of America club and Secretary of Mu Alpha Theta at Haynes Academy. He enjoys tutoring Haynes students and participates in Quizbowl, Youth and Government, Bollywood and Bhangra Club, Talented Theatre, Academic Games, the Future Business Leaders of America Club, football, soccer, and swimming for Haynes. In 2022, his team won 2nd in Sweepstakes at the Academic Games National Tournament. He recently won 2nd place in Introduction to Social Media Strategies at the FBLA State Leadership Conference. Neal is a participant and acts as Social Media Manager for the Lyceum for National Conversation. He is also serving as a General Assembly Presiding Officer for the 2024 Louisiana Youth and Government Model United Nations. He has a passion for debating and public speaking, hoping to have a career in government as a politician. As a member of LYAC, he aims to work with his

peers to address racial inequality and increase resources regarding the mental health problems that Louisiana's students face.

Vivienne Webb is 17 years old, and will be a senior at Caddo Magnet High in Shreveport this fall. They are in the Talented Arts Program in Visual Arts in school and a straight A student. Vivienne is active with LaCAN as a disability's rights advocate, is a Be Strong representative for their region, and a current voting member of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council as a self-advocate with Autism, Anxiety, & Epilepsy. Through testimony at the Louisiana Capitol, Vivienne advocated for & obtained \$2 million in funding for the lowest-funded Human Service Districts so they could better serve their communities, helped work to enact policy that would allow cameras in special education classrooms upon parental request, as well as helped secure funding for its implementation. Most recently, Vivienne has been actively advocating for changes in our state open meeting laws to allow for virtual participation and representation in board & entity meetings for both the disabilities community as well as the general public. Vivienne is the 2021 recipient of the Billy Michal Student Leadership Award for the state of Louisiana for advocacy work through LaCAN. This winter, Vivienne was honored and named as one of the Virginia Shehee most influential young women and also named one of LPB's 2023 Young Heroes. They currently serve as a Governor appointed & Senate confirmed voting member of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council and is in their second year of a four-year term where they work to make our state the best possible place for the community they represent. In spite of their diagnoses, Vivienne always remains focused on bettering the world for everybody in every way they possibly can.

Lauren Wiltz is a rising senior at The Academy of the Sacred Heart in Grand Coteau. She was elected Senior Class President and is Treasurer of the of the National Honor Society chapter at ASH. In 2022, Lauren won first place in French III at the Louisiana District and State Literary Rallies. She is also president and founder of the "Eating Around the World Club" at The Academy and is the current Senior Cheer Captain for the Sacred Heart cheerleading team, where she has been a Varsity member for three years. Lauren participated in the Network of Sacred Heart Schools exchange program and traveled to New Zealand to attend Beredene College of the Sacred Heart School in Auckland, NZ. In addition, she was chosen as Senior Head House Girl and is a Student Ambassador. In 2022, Lauren was nominated for the Leukemia And Lymphoma Society's Student of The Year. As a team leader, she raised \$51,480.77 to help fight blood cancer and was honored to receive the LLS Community Involvement Award. In 2023, she was also chosen as a mentor and auction committee leader for LLS. Lauren also serves on the Lafayette Mayor President's Youth Advisory Council. She is a lead altar server at Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church in Opelousas, where she has served since fifth grade. For the past two years, she has been member of a nationally competitive cheer team, winning multiple championships. Lauren has also volunteered at Miles Perret and the St. Landry Parish District Attorney's office. This summer Lauren will be a camp counselor at Blue Ribbon Camp and was chosen for the Summer Scholars program at Notre Dame in Indiana where she will be studying World Politics. She will also be representing her school at Girls State and will be employed at the Department of Justice at the Louisiana State Capital in Baton Rouge. This will be Lauren's

second year as member of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council. Lauren is excited to continue working with her peers to further implement the “Let’s Talk” initiative throughout the schools and work with legislators to pass laws to help make schools a safe haven for all students.