



## Youth Advocate Leadership Academy

### Purpose

As the youth movement expands across the country, youth advocates are stepping into roles that support systemic transformation and working to improve services and supports for all young adults with lived experience with mental health challenges and other system involvement. Young adults assuming leadership and advocacy roles within communities must be able to recognize intrinsic strengths, build self-awareness, and have opportunities to identify areas for future growth and learning. These opportunities develop the capacity for youth advocates to become effective leaders. There is limited availability of leadership curricula within the youth advocacy movement, and especially any that is youth driven; infused and vetted by current young leaders with lived experience, who have served in national leadership and advocacy roles. This unique lens provides the understanding of the unique similarities and differences of advocacy and leadership roles and thus is able to articulate the leadership challenges faced in the transition from a self-advocate to a collective advocate within the larger community and/or system. Leadership development is a critical investment in transforming service systems to offer responsive supports for all future youth.

### Population

Youth MOVE National's Youth Advocate Leadership Academy is for youth and young adults, ages 16-25, who identify as having lived experience or systems involvement, have demonstrated strong self-efficacy skills, and aspire to use those skills in the context of the larger youth movement.

### Approach

The Youth Advocate Leadership Academy is two-and-half-day leadership development training designed to create a peer led environment that identifies and builds off each individual's current leadership skills and supports participants to move towards future leadership aspirations within the youth movement. The Academy offers youth and young adults a collective experience that blends experiential learning with peer facilitated group discussions and activities that provide opportunities for application of key leadership concepts. The curriculum is broken out into three modules; power of personal leadership, journey of leadership, and leadership in action. Each module supports the individual in gaining insight into what influences one's leadership.

### Learning Goals

1. Participants understand how personal values, culture, and experiences shape one's approach to leadership and ability to connect with others.
2. Participants identify individual strengths and application of those strengths in various leadership roles.
3. Participants recognize the strengths others have and how to build off those to develop meaningful partnerships.
4. Participants will understand how lived experience and behavior shapes one's understanding of leadership.
5. Participants will recognize how they can grow their leadership skills through access to information, ability to influence, and connect with others.
6. Participants are able to reflect on where they are on the YA2AY continuum.
7. Participants are able to identify resources and supports needed to be become effective leader.
8. Participants are able to confidently make informed leadership decision when needed.
9. Participants understand what it means to be an effective leader.
10. Participants acknowledge their leadership role and the role of others when addressing leadership challenges.

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