

ITEM C.202 FOR INFORMATION

YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM REPORT

The Young Adult Volunteer program has placed 85 persons for service in the coming year (August 2015 – August 2016.). These young adults began service in August, and will be serving at 5 international and 16 national sites for the coming year. Please keep them, their families, and those they are serving alongside in prayer during this year of transformative service.

Overall program numbers

The 2015/16 YAV participant number of 85 is above the program's overall average (69 participants from 1993-2015), however it is below our projected goals for growth this year. In 2012, as a part of the Mission Work Plan, the YAV program's goals were set to "triple the number of participants in four years." This goal would result in 180 YAV participants beginning service next year, in August 2016.

We are currently examining our recruitment strategies for the coming year. We remain excited about the direction of our recruitment efforts, but also are working to improve our reach and scope in recruitment in the coming year. We are always learning how best to invite young adults into this opportunity.

It is helpful to note the wider context of young adult service. All but one of our cohorts of faith-based year-long service programs are experiencing declines in participant numbers. Further, much larger programs such as AmeriCorps, PeaceCorps and Teach for America are also experiencing declines in application numbers. Most observers point to the strengthening economy and job market for young adults as the primary reason for these changes in young adult volunteerism.

We remain hopeful that the YAV program is a unique and strong opportunity for many young adults, emphasizing faith formation and leadership development. Because we believe in the strength of the program for its participants, we are committed to continuing to grow its size and scope, even if tripling numerically is not a realizable goal in four years.

Areas of growth

The YAV program has seen areas of strong growth in the past three years. We work hard, along with all our local partners, to make sure every YAV year is a time of meaningful service, personal transformation, and leadership development for each YAV.

We have added new sites, expanding the opportunities for YAVs to work with both national and international partners. In 2012 we had 13 sites; in 2015 we will have 21 YAV sites.

The racial/ethnic makeup of the YAV program has become increasingly diverse in the past three years. This is a part of intentional efforts to change all levels of the YAV program to be a more deeply diverse, culturally competent, and prophetic ministry. We have increased recruiting of racially diverse young adults, examined structural issues within our program that are limitations for many young adults, and are increasing our staff and local board diversity to strengthen our ability to successfully work with a deeply

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diverse group of young adults. This year’s YAV class is 21% persons of color; this work is bearing fruit.

What is needed

The YAV program has two primary areas in which it needs strong support from the PMA board: recruitment and fundraising. To accomplish these two goals, we have been sharing about the *YAV a Year* program –to invite every Presbyterian congregation to either send or support a young adult in service. We invite each PMA board member to encourage their congregation to join this effort.

The primary need for the YAV program is identifying and inviting young adults to serve in this program. To accomplish this, the YAV program has taken a ‘recruiter of recruiters’ approach – working to identify and equip key people throughout our church to share about this program, and invite young adults to consider and apply. This includes the natural suspects of this type of recruitment - YAV participants and alums of the program, campus ministers, etc., but it also includes all types of pastors, congregational leaders, Christian educators, institutional leaders and others. We want to work with the Board and other leaders within our connectional church to make sure that all young adults in our wide circle of support know and have considered the YAV program as a way that God could be working in their lives.

Following our increased recruitment, the YAV program is building a campaign to sustainably fund this ministry as it grows and deepens. Through our partnership with Funds Development Ministry, and under the leadership of Linda Carter, the Mission Engagement Advisor for the YAV program, we are identifying areas of long lasting, sustainable support for this program. We are first working to identify individuals and congregations closest to the YAV program and its alums, knowing that they see most clearly the fruit that this program bears. We also want to increase the support of a much wider set of congregations and individuals, inviting them to participate with the YAV program in the development of a rising generation of faithful, mission-centric, and committed leaders.

To accomplish both of these goals, we need to increase the publicity and awareness of the YAV program. We hope that the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board, both individually and as an agency, will continue its support and increase its efforts to strengthen and expand this program in the years to come.

YAV 2015/2016 Class Profile

Total placed (8/1/2015): 85
2014/15 Goal: 120

Place of Service:

International 19 22% in 5 International sites
National 66 78% in 16 National sites

Gender:

Male 29%
Female 71%

Racial/Ethnic Composition:

21% persons of color
79% white

1%	Multiple race/ethnicities
2%	Black/African American
8%	Asian/Asian American /Pacific Islander
11%	Hispanic/ Latino/a
79%	White

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Denominational Affiliation:

74% PC(USA)

26% Other Denominations

(12 denominations total; primarily Catholic, Non-denominational, and Mennonite)

YAV Exchange program:

The YAV program is excited to expand the Exchange program for the second year. We will have four young adults from Korea serving in various national sites, and this year we will also have one young adult from Mexico serving in our bi-national Tucson site, through a partnership with the Frontera de Cristo Border Ministry.

Synod:

Alaska/Northwest	1
Boriquen	
Covenant	7
Lakes and Prairies	2
Lincoln Trails	9
Living Waters	4
Mid-America	2
Mid-Atlantic	12
Northeast	8
Pacific	1
Rocky Mountains	1
South Atlantic	12
Southern Cal& HI	
Southwest	4
Sun	12
Trinity	5

Highest Presbytery totals:

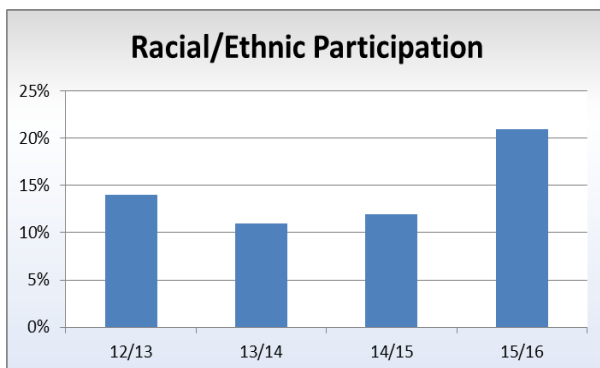
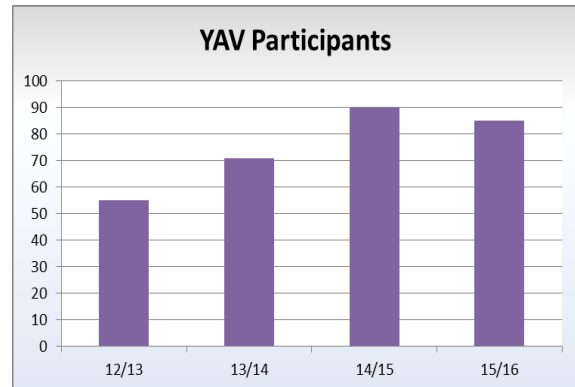
Arkansas	5
Chicago	5
De Cristo	4
Charlotte	3
Detroit	3
Grace	3
New Hope	3

Highest Congregation totals:

Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock	3
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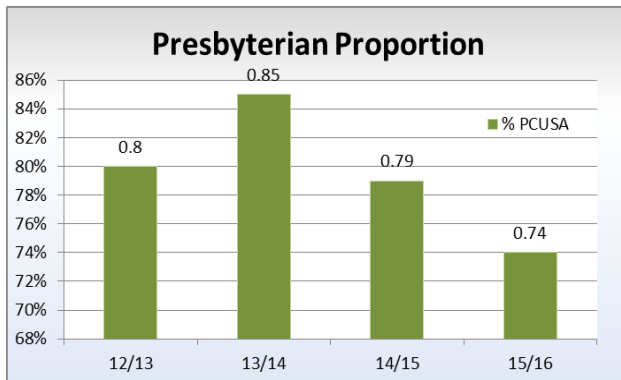
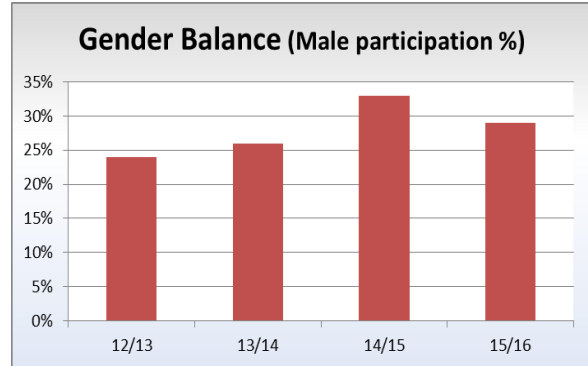
When looking at the overall trends for the size and scope of the YAV program, it is helpful to look at trends from the last four years.

In this, you see strong growth beginning in 2012, with the challenge to triple the size of the program. This growth continues up to the 15/16 class, which is slightly smaller than the previous class.



However, other markers of growth in the diversity of the program are continuing to grow strongly. One of the challenges to grow the program was to make the YAV program accessible to a wide range of participants to whom it previously had been considered inaccessible. Through specific programmatic changes and recruitment efforts, we are succeeding in making this program more deeply diverse.

Another marker of our increase in diversity has been specifically increasing male participation. These efforts have also been showing fruit.



The YAV program remains a strongly Presbyterian program, but is intentionally increasing its ecumenical participation. This adds a diversity of traditions and faith expressions to the learning and serving environment for all YAV participants.

For more information on the program, please visit www.youngadultvolunteers.org