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**Frost Valley YMCA**

## **Frost Valley YMCA Sends Five Young Leaders to Global Youth Event YMCA175**

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Claryville, NY - Frost Valley YMCA, a year-round camp and environmental education center located in the Catskills, was honored to send five Counselors in Training (CiTs) to YMCA175, a global event aimed at cultivating youth leadership within the Y. Hosted by YMCA Europe in partnership with YMCA England, the World Alliance of YMCAs, and YMCA of the USA, YMCA175 brought together young leaders from Ys around the world between August 4-8, 2019.

This milestone event was aimed at convening young people to connect with one another, build relationships and strengthen cross-cultural understanding, celebrate 175 years of the Y's impact on youth and communities around the world, and create solutions to the pressing social issues affecting youth – primarily those issues addressed by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. More than 600 people between the ages of 16 and 35 from the U.S. joined peers from nearly 100 countries around the world for this momentous occasion.

Frost Valley's delegation of CiTs came together with other youth delegates to explore panels and workshops on topics such as health and wellbeing, economic empowerment and employment, civic engagement, and the environment – to name a few. Speakers included: Social Activist, Motivational Speaker, and Mental Health Advocate, Loizza Aquino; Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ms Jayathma Wickramanayake; Archbishop of York, John Sentamu; and award-winning Haitian-American entrepreneur and start-up ecosystem expert for emerging markets, Christine Souffrant Ntim.

The entire experience for Frost Valley's CiT's went beyond the four days of this landmark event. The trip included a five-day orientation at Frost Valley from July 28 – August 1, 2019, and 13 days in London from August 2-15 for YMCA175 followed by cultural and historical excursions to places including: St. Paul's Cathedral, the London Tower, Westminster Abbey, and others. After departing from London, the CiTs returned to Frost Valley for a two-day debrief from August 16-18, 2019, during which time they discussed their experiences and formulated project plans to positively impact youth.

As a vital part of this experience, the CiTs created presentations for Frost Valley's senior staff and directors to demonstrate their innovative projects that will impact the lives of young people. Most notably, two of these presentations were focused on providing opportunities for families within the foster care system and for adopted children of transracial families to come to Frost Valley to participate in activities that promote relationship building, inclusion, and the formation of a support network, all in the great outdoors.

"It's crucial that we include young people when addressing the issues that are affecting their

generation," says Amanda Hinski, Frost Valley's Chief Brand Experience Officer, who attended YMCA175 as an event planning committee member. "As a leader in youth development, Frost Valley is finding more and more that young people are not just leaders of tomorrow, many of them are already eager to lead the way right now. Frost Valley is honored to provide our campers with opportunities that will help them grow as leaders and inspire them to positively impact their communities and the world at large."

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**Photo:** Frost Valley CiTs at YMCA175.jpg

**Caption:** Frost Valley YMCA sends five Counselors in Training (CiTs) to global youth event YMCA175 in London, England this summer. In addition to attending the event to discuss global issues affecting youth, these CiTs took cultural excursions to places like Tower Bridge in London.