

## YMCA Youth & Government

How did the YMCA Youth & Government program impact your life?

My experiences in Y&G fueled my interest in public service, government, and politics. Now 30 years later I can look back and say with certainty that had I not participated in Y&G, I would not be where I am today as a Commissioner in the New Hampshire state government.



**What years did you attend Y&G:** 1985-87

**What High School did you attend:**  
Littleton High School

**Did you hold an office?**  
Committee chair and Speaker of the House

**How did you learn about youth and government:**  
Gene Clark (the dad) and Helen Joyce (LHS teacher)

**Favorite memory from the program?**  
I discovered a number of years later that the faculty advisor for the committee I served on in 1985 was a social studies teacher from Concord High School named Christa McAuliffe. Another notable memory was that the advisor to me when I was elected Speaker was former Speaker Marshall Cobleigh. Many years later, Marshall and I worked together on the staff of U.S. Representative Bill Zeff of New Hampshire in Washington, DC.

**Why do you think the Y&G program is still relevant today?**  
New Hampshire has a long tradition of local control, public service, and balanced small government. This type of governmental system demands public participation, creativity in approach, innovative strategy, and collaboration among many public and private organizations. Knowledge of how and why NH's system is unique, appreciating how accessible it is, and understanding why that is so fundamental to our success as a state are crucial lessons for our young people to learn, and I am not aware of any program that teaches those lessons better than Y&G.

**Are there any values you learned still with you or guide you today?**  
When it comes to success in policy and government, be confident in your positions and opinions, be adaptable your strategies, and be patient with your approach.

**Taylor Caswell -**  
Department of Business  
and Economic Affairs Commissioner.