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**2014 KENTUCKY YMCA UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLIES CONVENE**

*Students participate in 3-day experiences in global citizenship; Draft resolution on Crimea*

LOUISVILLE – Over the past 3 weeks, more than 3,500 middle and high school students, teachers, and volunteers from around the Commonwealth participated in 5 sessions of the Kentucky United Nations Assembly, or KUNA – a 3-day Model UN and international immersion program of the Kentucky YMCA Youth Association. The two high school sessions, held March 9-11 and 13-15, were followed by three middle school sessions held March 16-18, 20-22, and 23-25.

KUNA participants serve as UN Ambassadors from nations chosen by their schools. Ambassadors prepare an interactive Global Village exhibit for their country, design and wear native attire, and author a UN Proposal on an international issue. Participants also have the opportunity to serve on the Security Council, as advocates in the International Court of Justice, or as members of the press.

The Secretary General at each session selects a proposal for debate in the KUNA General Assembly. At our high school sessions, Sec. Gen. Jenna Farineau (duPont Mauual HS) selected a proposal to promote the responsible use of antibiotics (by St. Xavier HS), and Sec. Gen. Maya Burke (Frankfort HS) selected a proposal to combat world hunger through increased financial commitments from veto-power nations (by Western Hills HS).

At our middle school sessions, Sec. Gen. Lydia Mason (Noe MS) selected a proposal to increase educational opportunities for law-caste families in India (by Elkhorn MS), Sec. Gen. Ben Childers (Corbin HS) selected a proposal to reduce air pollution in China (by Olmsted North MS), and Sec. Gen. Malcom Walker (Harrison Co. MS) selected a proposal to build thermal-solar power plants in underdeveloped areas of Pakistan (by North Laurel MS).

The current situation between Ukraine and Russia provided the KUNA Security Council with an opportunity to deliberate on an active international crisis. Security Council members at our first high school session received a briefing from Natasha Reimer, a native of the Crimean capitol of Simferopol and staff member for Louisville-based Amazing Global Marketplace, and passed a resolution agreeing to monitor the Crimean vote on secession.

As part of a service-learning partnership between the YMCA and Louisville-based Waterstep ([www.waterstep.org](http://www.waterstep.org)), the 5 KUNA sessions collectively donated over 4,000 lbs. of shoes to help fund safe drinking water projects around the world.

Each KUNA session also elected a new Secretary General for 2015. Talha Muhammad of Boyle Co. HS, Brianna Daniel of Presentation Academy, Blessing Mhlanga of Meyzeek MS, Micah Fowler of Boyle Co. MS, and Bella Beilman of St. Patrick School were each elected to serve as Secretary General for their respective KUNA sessions in 2015.

For a full list of selected proposals, honorees, and award winners, please visit [www.kyyymca.org/2014-awards](http://www.kyyymca.org/2014-awards)

The Kentucky YMCA Youth Association was founded in 1890 as the State YMCA of Kentucky, held the first Kentucky United Nations Assembly in 1959, and is currently led by CEO Ben Reno-Weber.

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**About the Kentucky YMCA Youth Association**

The Kentucky YMCA Youth Association is committed to developing engaged citizens and servant leaders who are inspired to affect change in their schools, communities, Commonwealth, nation, and world. The Kentucky YMCA Youth Association is the largest YMCA Youth In Government program in the country, working alongside programs in 38 states to serve over 50,000 students nationwide.



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**Awards** [www.kyyymca.org/kuna/2014-awards](http://www.kyyymca.org/kuna/2014-awards)