



Celebrating 30 Years of Impact

By Christin Wisniewski

Impact is defined as the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another. Force was not used in the creation of Know Your Government (KYG), but a challenge. Over the course of the past 30 years over 5,000 youth lives have been changed through KYG.

I am the 7th child in my family and the 5th to be on the KYG steering committee. The first year I attended KYG I felt my siblings and the adults who had been going to KYG had high expectations for me, which made me very nervous. Even before I was eligible to attend the conference, I was pushed to apply for the steering committee as a reporter. Being a reporter was a very new experience for me as I had never been on a committee before. During my 3rd year I experienced a lot of growth in my ability to work with people I was unfamiliar with and being more assertive in speaking with my peers. After I was accepted as the 4th year News Editor I began having doubts about if

I was qualified for the position. This conference has helped me work through my insecurities and do the best job I can, while working on a team.

I have yet to realize the full impact of KYG on my future, although it has effected my life in many different ways. I am glad I have had this opportunity and I challenge anyone who reads this, no matter your age or stage in life; to seek out things that might seem too difficult for you or even unachievable. Even if you fail, there are still lessons to be learned, get back up and try again. Impact people for the better, wherever you are.



University of Idaho
Extension

Where It All Started

By Alyssa Hansten

Thirty years ago, the Know Your Government Conference was started by Mary Jean Craig. One of her first tasks after moving to the state office was to create the KYG conference. The idea originally came from a similar conference held in Washington State. When she started working on the conference, Mary Jean did not have an interest in government affairs. Mary Jean became hooked on working with the conference after she began to see the impact it was having on the delegates that participated in it. The first activity of the conference was a mock legislative session. As the conference grew, and participation increased, the judicial track was added. Mary Jean said she would not want to play the role of an attorney, but she would have enjoyed participating in the judicial tract.

Mary Jean's career in 4-H began when she was eight years old. Originally, members had to be ten years old to be a member of 4-H, and associate members, now called Cloverbuds, had to be nine years of age. She grew up doing many miscellaneous projects and eventually finished her time as a member. After high school, Mary Jean decided she wanted to teach kindergarten and pursued a degree in education. She was looking for a job in her new home town of Portland and accepted a position with the Clackamas Extension Office. Six months later, she accepted

a job at the Latah County Office, and then started to work at the University of Idaho State 4-H office.

The conference has changed and grown over the course of 30 years. It started out as a small mock legislative session in Latah County and became a weekend long conference including a legislative session, a judicial session, breakfast with legislators, and more. It originally started with four planning committee members and has now expanded to 24 members of the steering committee. The legislative program started as a debate over an actual bill presented in the Idaho legislature. As the program evolved, the legislative coordinator authored a bill to be debated in a mock committee meeting. Now, members of the steering committee draft bills to be debated by the delegates.

Even though Mary Jean was not a delegate, she is proud of what the conference has become. Thank you Mary Jean for starting this conference which has impacted over 5,000 4-H members that have attended so far.



KYG BY THE NUMBERS

5098

Youth in KYG 1988 - 2018

151

Number of Delegates in 2018

300

Meals served at Monday Breakfast

19

Combined hours traveling to the conference



To print the 2018 KYG newsletter scan QR code or visit website

<https://www.uidaho.edu/extension/4h/events/know-your-government>



UI4HKYG



#idkygclover



IDAHO4H

