

# British Columbia Youth Parliament

2004 – 2005 Annual Report



“Youth Serving Youth”

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# Introduction

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## Who We Are

British Columbia Youth Parliament is a youth-driven, non-profit, non-partisan, non-denominational organisation that aims to further the mental, spiritual, physical and social development of the youth of British Columbia. In keeping with its motto "Youth Serving Youth," British Columbia Youth Parliament is composed of 95 British Columbians between the ages of 16 and 22. These youth come from across the province and from diverse backgrounds to combine their creativity, skills and determination to plan, fundraise for and implement projects that benefit the youth of British Columbia.

British Columbia Youth Parliament is different from all other youth service organizations. We are an organization entirely run by youth who develop, fund and operate projects that few other youth organisations will even attempt.

By putting on such projects, Members not only provide the youth of British Columbia with enriching, life altering opportunities, but also enhance their own leadership skills.



*"Members of British Columbia Youth Parliament are not the leaders of tomorrow - they are already community leaders today."*

# Introduction

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## Our Parliamentary Tradition

Meeting for the first time in 1924, BCYP began as the TUXIS Older Boys' Parliament, an organisation under the umbrella of the National TUXIS Movement of the United Church of Canada. After the Second World War, the Older Boys' Parliament expanded and in the 1960's it became independent from the United Church. With the admittance of young women in 1974, the organisation evolved into the British Columbia Youth Parliament. We celebrated our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2003-2004 with a special reception, bringing together alumni from across the years and around the province.



Between December 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, our 95 Members ("Parliamentarians") gather at the Legislature in Victoria for their Parliamentary Session. Members sit as independents and all votes are free, meaning that Members vote on issues according to their individual consciences instead of being restrained by Government or Opposition party lines. Members learn about the parliamentary process and debate resolutions on local, national and international issues. More importantly, the Members debate bills proposed by Cabinet that plan the organisation's activities for the upcoming year. Upon passing these bills, which include the Camp Phoenix Act and Parliamentary Activities Act, the Members become bound to fulfill those legislative provisions. They then spend the remainder of the parliamentary year working to make their proposed projects become a reality.



*"BCYP is not a  
"mock" or "model"  
parliament. The  
legislation the  
Members pass at  
Session translates  
into visible, positive  
action within the  
community."*

# Camp Phoenix

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## Project Overview



Camp Phoenix is by far the most ambitious and far-reaching project undertaken by British Columbia Youth Parliament. The project truly redefines words like “hard work” and “commitment.” Camp is conceived, developed and staffed almost entirely by Members of British Columbia Youth Parliament.

Camp Phoenix is a weeklong residential summer camp for children aged eight to twelve who would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend a summer camp due to social or financial hardships. Funds permitting, we aim to provide a memorable summer camp experience for fifty campers and hope to make available partial or full bursaries to every camper whose participation in Camp Phoenix would be hindered by the already subsidized camper fee.

Camp Phoenix is fully accredited by the British Columbia Camping Association. Indeed, Camp Phoenix often exceeds the requirements of the Association. In particular, Camp Phoenix provides a 3 to 6 cabin leader to camper ratio, ensuring that each child enjoys personal attention and receives close supervision.

Held at different campsites throughout the province in order to serve children from as many regions as possible, Camp Phoenix is estimated to have served some 1500 campers since its creation over thirty-five years ago. The Camp Phoenix experience has touched not only the lives of each of its campers, but it has also helped the youth who undertake this challenge each year to realize their ability to serve others and offer lasting contributions within their communities.

*“A caring, energetic crew of volunteer staff is dedicated to providing an unforgettable week of excitement and discovery for each and every camper.”*



# Camp Phoenix

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## Camp Phoenix 2005

Camp Phoenix 2005 was held at Camp Miriam on Gabriola Island from August 27<sup>th</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Fifty-two children attended as campers, cared for by a staff of 41 volunteers. Campers were recruited from around the Nanaimo area with the help of various organisations and schools.

Parliamentarians from across the province served as Cabin Leaders, Lifeguards, Activity Leaders and Kitchen Staff. In order to prepare for the gruelling week of camp, staff underwent a stringent application and screening process, and took part in a training session according to British Columbia Camp Association standards.



Activities at Camp Phoenix 2005 included arts and crafts, theatre sports, beach combing, science lab and outdoor sports. The theme of the camp, Fairy Tales, was enthusiastically embraced by all and incorporated into staff names, the Camp Phoenix ashes tradition and various other activities.



*"Camp Phoenix gives us the power to change the world."*



## Budget

In addition to organizing and staffing Camp Phoenix, Members are responsible for raising the funds necessary to execute this large project. The final cost of Camp Phoenix 2005 was just over \$27,000. This represented more than half of British Columbia Youth Parliament's 2004-2005 budget. Successful fundraising, generous camp grants and large donations resulted in most of the Camp Phoenix 2005 campers being able to attend completely free of charge.

## Sweet Dreams Dessert & Auction

British Columbia Youth Parliament has been holding an annual major fundraising auction for many years. The auction began as a potluck where Members' friends and families gathered together to raise money for British Columbia Youth Parliament's largest service project, Camp Phoenix, by bidding on silent Auction items. Gradually, the auction became a more formal and prestigious event.



In 2005, Sweet Dreams Dessert & Auction took place on June 10<sup>th</sup> in the Arbutus and Fairway Rooms at the Quilchena Golf and Country Club in Richmond, B.C. The event consisted of a sumptuous dessert buffet, an award presentation, and both a live and silent auction. Items up for bid included hotel get-aways, pieces of artwork, autographed items, and entertainment packages. The guest list included local politicians, community leaders, British Columbia Youth Parliament alumni, as well as Parliamentarians' own families and friends. Between bidding on items and enjoying the buffet, guests mingled while being serenaded by live music provided by talented Members.



## Regional Youth Parliaments

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In order to increase the number of youth who are able to take part in the Youth Parliament experience, the Members of British Columbia Youth Parliament organize and run Regional Youth Parliaments throughout the province. The Members plan and staff weekend-long Parliamentary Sessions for high school students between the ages of 14 to 18. These Sessions consist of a shortened, less formal version of what takes place at British Columbia Youth Parliament's own Session at the Legislature in Victoria. Thus, the Regional Youth Parliament Members learn about parliamentary procedure, debate current events and often legislate their own community activities. These activities, designed to benefit the youth of their respective regions, further spread the motto "youth serving youth" throughout British Columbia.

Three Regional Youth Parliaments occurred between February and May 2005. The 18<sup>th</sup> Vancouver Youth Parliament, British Columbia Youth Parliament's longest running Regional Youth Parliament, upheld its strong tradition for passionate debate with a contentious Private Members' Resolution on the sale of junk food in elementary and secondary schools. The 14<sup>th</sup> North Shore Youth Parliament made several important amendments to its constitutional acts. The 13<sup>th</sup> Lower Mainland East Youth Parliament returned to the Regional Youth Parliament circuit after several years' absence and was held at the New Westminster City Hall.

*"Regional Youth Parliaments dramatically increase the number of people touched by the "Youth Serving Youth" experience."*



## Other Activities

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### YouthSpeak Essay Challenge

For the past three years, British Columbia Youth Parliament has run an essay competition for British Columbian students in grades 8, 9 and 10. The purpose of the writing challenge is to make young students evaluate the role of youth in today's changing world. Essay topics have included naming the most significant challenge facing today's youth and evaluating how multiculturalism has affected the development of young people in British Columbia. The 3<sup>rd</sup> YouthSpeak Essay Challenge, judged in May 2005, rewarded cash prizes and plaques to category winners as well as special certificates for several more essays worthy of honourable mention.

### Individual and Group Community Service

In addition to all of its own ambitious projects, Members of British Columbia Youth Parliament also volunteer on an individual and group basis in their local communities, often in conjunction with other organizations.

Individually, Members serve as tutors, sports coaches, student council representatives, Girl Guide leaders and so forth. In small groups, Members make sandwiches for Vancouver East-Side shelters, work in soup kitchens, assist with the Vancouver Sun Run and help staff the Children's Festival.



*By helping other organisations in addition to running all of our own projects, Members demonstrate an unparalleled level of volunteerism and community spirit.*

## **Our Sponsors**

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British Columbia Youth Parliament relies upon the generous and continued support of community minded businesses and individuals in order to achieve its ambitious goals. In particular, cash donations made directly to Camp Phoenix and donations-in-kind made to our Sweet Dreams Dessert & Auction allow us to provide significant subsidies to campers in financial need, such that most campers are able to attend Camp completely free of charge. We would therefore like to express our most sincere thanks and gratitude to the following organizations and individuals:

### **CKNW Orphans' Fund**

108 Lions Club  
Ms Kerry Simmons  
Canadian Outback  
**Coca-Cola Canada Ltd**  
Ecomarine Kayaks  
Mrs. Shelley Wong  
Enchanted Florists  
Hotel Grand Pacific  
Hyak Inc.  
Interior Whitewater Expeditions  
Mr. & Mrs. Ashraf  
Carousel Theatre  
Mr. & Mrs. Mirriahi  
CIBC World Markets Children's  
Miracle Fund  
Mr. & Mrs. Wang  
Prince of Whales Whale Watching  
Mr. Mark Karujaluoto

Black Press Group Ltd.

Mr. Martin Gans

BC Lions

Mr. Peter Kalkman

Mr. Peter Turje

### **Terasen Gas**

Mr. Tom Wong

Mr. Wei Wang

Rotary Club of Vanderhoof

Ms Dorothy Wong

Arts Club Theatre

Ms Lynn Embury

Osoyoos Credit Union

Quilchena Golf and Country Club

Rev. Val Anderson

Vancouver Renfrew Lions Club

### **Vancouver Sun Children's Fund**

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Westin Bayshore Resort and Marina

## Contact Us

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If you would like more information about British Columbia Youth Parliament and its projects, visit our website at [www.bcyp.org](http://www.bcyp.org). Please also feel free to contact us directly.

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