

Capitol Forum on America's Future Comes to HOBY WA

Highlights from 2007 HOBYWA

By Michele Anciaux Aoki,
HOBYWA Director of Program
June, 2007

What is HOBY?

- Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) will soon celebrate 50 years as the country's top youth leadership development organization.
- Founded in 1958 by veteran actor Hugh O'Brian, HOBY's mission is to provide lifelong leadership development opportunities that empower individuals to achieve their highest potential.
- O'Brian set out to help young people make a difference and become positive catalysts for change—in the home, school, workplace, and community.

HOBYSeminars

- Each year HOBYSeminars are held across the United States and in a number of other nations.
- They bring high school sophomores together for 3 or 4-day seminars, organized by volunteers and staffed by HOBYSeminars alumni.
- Now, with more than 355,000 alumni leading the way, HOBYSeminars is respected worldwide for its youth leadership programs.
- This year's Washington State HOBYSeminars Seminar hosted 135 high school sophomores for 4 days at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA

Structure of HOBY Seminars

- Keynote speakers
 - HOBY participants, called *ambassadors*, learn to give proper introductions and build enthusiasm for the speaker's message
- Panels
 - Community and student leaders provide a variety of perspectives on topics such as Education, Service, Entrepreneurship, Diversity, and Media
- Service Projects
 - HOBY ambassadors perform service in the local community, then reflect on their experience

HOBY Panel: Future of the US

- The HOBY National model recommends including a panel on the “Future of the US”
- For HOBY Washington 2007, we decided to do a “mini Capitol Forum” for this panel:

Future of the US

“HOBY Ambassadors Deliberate the US
Role in the World”

How It Worked

We introduced the “Future of the US” panel:

- Gave them the 4 Futures handout and time in their small groups to review them
- Explained deliberation and the process they would use to gain an understanding of the four futures
- Modeled creating a “kinesthetic” representation of their Future (a “human statue”)
- Invited each small group to pick a representative for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
- Assigned ambassadors randomly to the 4 Futures breakout groups

Tasks for Breakout Groups

1. Prepare a brief (2-3 minute) verbal statement that will help the rest of the ambassadors really understand what their Future is about.
2. Create a poster that represents their Future (and prepare to have some ambassadors interpret it). It can include words or just be a visual representation.
3. Create a “human statue” that illustrates their Future.

Results: What Worked

- In just 40 minutes, the 4 Futures groups were able to grasp the essential messages of their Future and create an engaging oral, visual, and kinesthetic presentation.
- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, under the able guidance of James Jones, a counselor with an MA in Political Science, was able to construct excellent questions for each Future.
- Students interested in world affairs and global issues LOVED participating in this activity and really took the lead.

Results: What Didn't Work

- With large breakouts (about 30 students each), not everyone could participate fully.
- Because we assigned students randomly to the 4 Futures, they missed the camaraderie of their small groups, where they had begun developing relationships.
- Some Futures overran their presentation time, so we had to cut out much of the Future 5 discussion.
- Even in a group of future leaders, a number of students expressed that talking about current issues is not that interesting to them.

Lessons Learned

- The content and process of Capitol Forum are extremely versatile and can be used even in short timeframes (2 hours on a Friday night!).
- The availability of materials for free download makes it possible to run a program, even on a tight budget.
- We **MUST** do this much more often in many more settings if we are to prepare students to become responsible citizens and future leaders.



Practicing human statues. (Be “happy.”)



Small groups begin reviewing the 4 Futures.



Breakout groups explore each of the Futures.



Groups talk about approaches to their presentations.



Last minute preparations for the Futures presentations.



Senate Foreign Relations Committee prepares questions.



Senate Foreign Relations Committee ready to begin.



Future 1 begins its oral presentation.



Future 2 gives its kinesthetic presentation.



Future 2 gives its oral presentation.



Future 2 gives its visual presentation.



Future 3 gives its kinesthetic presentation.



Future 4 gives its kinesthetic presentation.

For More Information

- HOBY National www.hoby.org
- HOBY Washington www.hobywa.org
- Michele Anciaux Aoki, Ph.D., P.M.P.
HOBYWA Director of Program
State Organizer for Washington State
Capitol Forum
michele@anciauxinternational.com