2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR-END SUMMARY
The World Affairs Council of Philadelphia produces educational programming and global issues forums to diverse audiences throughout the greater Philadelphia region, including Council members, students, teachers and the general public. Since its founding in 1949, the Council has hosted more than 5,000 prominent speakers at events that have reached more than 500,000 community participants, forging a continuous dialogue between policymakers and the public. Over the past 71 years, the Council has also impacted the lives of more than a half million middle and high school students, providing them with meaningful opportunities to think critically and engage actively in their local and global communities.

This past year, the Council produced a range of global education and leadership programs for an extraordinarily diverse group of over 2,000 middle and high school students from over 80 schools across the Greater Philadelphia region. The overarching goals of these programs is to instill in today’s youth the skills, knowledge, and global awareness needed to live, work, and thrive in a rapidly evolving, increasingly interconnected world. Our programs include simulations and conferences, global leadership summer institutes, and briefings with high-level policy and opinion makers, as well as corporate, government, and non-profit leaders.

All student and teacher participants of the Council’s education programs are provided the opportunity to attend, as Council guests, our regularly scheduled speaker programs. This access affords students the chance to listen to and pose questions of influential national and global leaders, alongside Council members, and local civic leaders.

PHOTO: High school students step into the shoes of Senators’ Aides, and Expert Witnesses during the Council’s 2020 Model Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

“This program was very informative and engaging. It opened my eyes to what the Senate actually does, why testimonies from witnesses are important, and ultimately, how government functions.”

-2020 Model Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Student Participant

PHOTO: Students ask and respond to clarifying questions during the closing plenary of the 2019 International Student Summit on Information and Democracy
The 2019-2020 academic year saw an array of challenges and opportunities to education programs in the United States and throughout the world. Beginning in March 2020, the novel coronavirus forced schools in the greater Philadelphia region to begin remote instruction, and limited the opportunities for students to engage directly in in-person extracurricular programming. As detailed briefly through this summary, and in-depth in our online digital Academic Year-End Report, we responded to these challenges by instituting a number of policies and revamping programming to assure that students and faculty had the opportunity to partner with us in a remote learning capacity.

Through participation in the Council’s various educational programs, Philadelphia-region middle and high school students have opportunities to expand their knowledge and understanding of global affairs and international policy making. They also develop the confidence needed to engage more actively in school, gain access to a larger social network dedicated to their academic success, and build relationships with a diverse set of peers from across the Greater Philadelphia region.

Additionally, the Council’s educational mission supports a national interest in cultivating leaders and citizens who are informed, forward-thinking and can work collaboratively and creatively across geographical, cultural, economic and political borders. By nurturing the development of these skills, we not only prepare participating students to pursue successful careers, but we also prepare them with an international context and deeper understanding of how to be competent and thoughtful global citizens. Join us we look back on our successes in the 2019-2020 academic year and look forward to continuing to adapt to a new educational environment in the months ahead.

\[PHOTO: Global Smarts Mentoring Program students, faculty advisers, and mentors participate in a virtual Global Smarts session using Google Meet\]

\[PHOTO: With the 2020 Summer Global Leadership Program being completely virtual, students presented foreign policy theme presentations to their peers and Council supporters using Zoom\]

\[I wasn't expecting to find myself as interested in studying foreign affairs as I did this week. From the expert speakers to the debate about the U.S./China trade war, this was one of the BEST weeks this summer! -2020 Summer Global Leadership Seminar Student Participant\]
The events of 2019 and 2020 have been equally historic, challenging, and hopeful. Domestic and international crises reshaped our students’ education, social experiences, and extracurricular activities. In the face of these challenges, the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia has reaffirmed its commitment to providing critical and substantive global affairs related programming for students. In addition, the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia recognizes the historic nature of this moment, and further commits itself to providing students a platform to confront these global issues, and to develop into leaders.

The intensity of the recent challenges has been matched by a profound enthusiasm from our students and teachers. We saw a continued interest in our simulation programming covering a myriad of topics of global concern. The December 2019 International Student Summit on Information and Democracy tackled the growing threats of misinformation and disinformation on democratic institutions. Students attending our signature Jr. Model United Nations program explored international efforts to combat climate change and aid refugees. And for the first time in a decade, students participated in a Model Senate Foreign Relations committee, and were introduced to the complex space between international affairs and domestic politics.

Through these programs, the individual connections with students from our partner high school, Bodine High School for International Affairs, and the resounding success of our week-long, virtual Summer Global Leadership Seminar, we remain hopeful for the next generation of leaders. Their compassion, energy, and excitement for international relations and global affairs remains unwavering even through the closing of schools and the transition to online learning. Their successes, highlighted throughout this summary, serve as testament to the World Affairs Council’s educational legacy.
2019-20 Academic Year by the Numbers

2,036
Students served through simulation programs, speaker events, seminars and briefings

82
Middle and High Schools served both in and around the greater Philadelphia region

50%
Of students receive a partial or full scholarship to participate in our programs

120
Middle and High School students and teachers in attendance at the Council's speaker events

1/3
Of our students are from low to moderate Income Philadelphia-area Middle and High Schools

8
Number of students who successfully completed all program requirements for the Council's state-wide Global Scholars Certificate Program

1
Award given to the Council's Global Smarts Mentoring Program for Excellence in K-16 Partnerships
International Student Summit on Information and Democracy
Wednesday, December 11, 2019 - Temple University

Approximately 270 high school students, representing 22 schools from across the Greater Philadelphia area attended the World Affairs Council’s meeting of international advocates for free speech, journalism, and a free and independent press. Through intensive research and group collaboration, students engaged with issues around pervasive disinformation, the suppression of free press, and a growing influence of anti-democratic regimes around the world.

Model Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Tuesday, March 3, 2020 - Temple University

After a ten year hiatus, the Council once again hosted a Model Senate Committee on Foreign Relations program for approximately 150 high school students from 15 schools across the Greater Philadelphia area. Students played the role of Senators, Senators’ Aides, Expert Witnesses, and Journalists and were assigned to one of three Senate subcommittees. After hearing well-researched testimonies from panels of Expert Witnesses and having the opportunity to ask the witnesses questions, Senators and Senators’ Aides in each subcommittee were tasked with creating resolutions that suggested specific policies and proposals aimed at mitigating the threats posed by their specific issue and promoting desired solutions.

Summer Global Leadership Seminar
Election 2020: U.S. Foreign Policy & America’s Role in the World
July 13-17, 2020 - Virtual Program (Zoom)

Approximately twenty six rising high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors participated in the Council’s annual Summer Global Leadership Seminar. This year’s week-long program discussed issues central to our country’s national interest and explored topics related to America’s role in a changing world. Students also learned more in-depth about the modern history of U.S. foreign policy and explored the 2020 presidential candidates’ stances on key foreign policy issues. On the Seminar’s fifth and final day, students presented on an assigned foreign policy topic.
Student Diplomat Program / Jr. Model United Nations
Cultural Diplomacy Conference
January 2020 · Penn Museum

Over three days in January, and produced in partnership with the Penn Museum, students explored the importance of cross-cultural understanding and diplomacy through collaborative presentations conducted by the Council and the Museum’s International Classroom professionals. The program also included small group tours facilitated by the Penn Museum’s Global Guides and scholars.

Student Diplomat Program / Jr. Model United Nations
Preparatory Conference
March 2020 · Fox School of Business at Temple University

Over a two day period, Council staff met with all 750 students to conduct intensive four-hour prep sessions that included an outline of the roles and responsibilities of the United Nations, an introduction to writing and amending resolutions, and a substantive topic briefing by an expert on each topic. This past year, students addressed two important issues: ending forced labor, and providing clean and affordable energy to all.

Student Diplomat Program / Jr. Model United Nations
Final Conference / End-of-program Assignments

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to cancel the in-person Final Conference for the 2020 Jr. Model UN program. In response to this cancellation, we decided to include two optional activities for students who had the capacity to finish the program. We asked students to pen a letter to Ambassador Kelly Craft, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations. Students were asked to convey a short message about their topic of study and why united global action on issues is important to mitigation efforts. Second, students were asked to make a videotaped one to three minute speech to the General Assembly. This project allowed students to practice the research, rhetoric, and public speaking skills they developed over the course of the five-month, Jr. Model UN program.
To advance the integration of global cultural awareness, critical thinking, and investigative skills into Pennsylvania’s high school curriculum, the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, with the support of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, has introduced the Global Scholars Certificate across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Global Scholars Certificate is designed to be a three-year experiential-learning program that fosters cross-cultural awareness, interdisciplinary understanding, and local and international community engagement.

In June 2020, eight senior students from Riverview High School (Oakmont, PA), Hershey High School (Hershey, PA) and Haverford High School (Havertown, PA) completed all requirements necessary to receive the Global Scholars Certificate and diploma designation.

The Global Scholars Certificate is designed to prepare participating students to succeed in a quickly changing 21st century. The Certificate promotes leaders and citizens who are informed, forward-thinking, and can work collaboratively and creatively across geographical, cultural, economic, and political borders.

To receive the Global Scholars Certificate and diploma designation, students must: Complete six courses across three different disciplines that are designated as "globally focused" by each individual school and districts' Global Scholars leadership; demonstrate skill in a foreign language; participate in at least three globally-focused extra-curricular activities (i.e. Model UN); complete a minimum of twenty hours of globally-focused service learning; and complete a capstone research project that encapsulates their global competency.
The Global Smarts Mentoring Program is an award-winning program that was developed in 2012 with the aim of “leveling the playing field” for middle school students from under-resourced schools participating in the Council’s Student Diplomat Program / Jr. Model United Nations program (Jr. MUN). It is a rigorous global literacy tutoring program pairing 6-8th grade students from under-resourced and low- to middle-income Philadelphia public, parochial and charter schools with college student mentors.

Through weekly individual and small-group instruction at their assigned middle school site, mentors provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to confidently participate in Jr. MUN. In order to meet program objectives, beginning in January and continuing through May, undergraduate students from Saint Joseph’s University and Temple University met weekly with participants for 60-75 minutes either during or after school. Additionally, mentors met weekly, for approximately 120 minutes, with the Council’s education staff to review teaching strategies and to assess student progress and challenges. Global Smarts moved to a completely virtual format in mid-March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In its eighth year of operation, the Global Smarts Mentoring Program grew from 152 students attending nine schools in the 2018-19 school year, to 163 students attending ten schools in the 2019-20 school year. All 2019-20 Global Smarts schools were in Philadelphia County, and constituted Title I schools where a majority of the student population qualified for free or reduced lunch.

The Global Smarts Mentoring Program was the recipient of the 2020 Lindy Award for Excellence in K-16 Partnerships from the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND). The Lindy Award aims to recognize a collaborative partnership between at least one K-12 school and one university.
THANK YOU
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*Supports our Global Smarts Mentoring Program for Middle School Students