



Michigan State Police Youth Leadership Academy

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The Michigan State Police Youth Leadership Academy (MSPYLA) provides teens, ages 14-16, with the opportunity to develop leadership skills and build positive relationships with law enforcement officers. The teens spend a week at the MSP Training Academy, in Lansing, where they receive instruction from officers from their hometown police department and the state police in an effort to form a foundation of responsibility, respect, and trust, benefiting the teens, law enforcement officers, and their community.

A graduation ceremony for each class is held in the local community with representatives from local agencies addressing the students. During the academy, students are provided with tennis shoes and clothing to wear throughout the week. Upon graduation, students receive dress pants, a shirt, and tie to wear for the graduation ceremony (and future job interviews), as well as a backpack filled with school supplies.



Mentoring

Students meet with a law enforcement mentor as a group and individually to help strengthen relationships between youth and law enforcement. Troopers are often contacted by previous students to speak at churches, schools, sporting events, or for assistance with job interviews or relationship issues.

Law Enforcement Career Exposure

The students receive presentations by MSP specialty teams, including the Canine Unit, Emergency Support Team, Precision Driving Unit, Underwater Recovery Team, and Computer Crimes Unit to introduce them to various aspects of law enforcement.

Lessons Learned

Students experience physical training, first aid, ethics, military drill, water safety, presentation skills, job interview techniques, gang awareness, emergency preparedness, leadership, and other team and character building exercises. The students also tour Michigan State University and the State Capitol.

MSPYLA 2012

112 youth attended classes in 2012:

- 1 Detroit class of young men
- 1 Lansing and Detroit class of young men
- 1 Flint class of young women
- 2 Flint classes of young men



The Michigan State Police has hosted the Youth Leadership Academy since 2005. More than 700 teens have attended, representing the cities of Benton Harbor, Battle Creek, Detroit, Flint, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon Heights, Pontiac, and Saginaw. This project was supported by the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant #2009-SU-B9-4017, awarded by the Bureau of Justice of Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, and administered by the Michigan State Police.