



State's Attorney's Office
LAKE COUNTY, IL

Young Ambassadors Board

2018-2019 Handbook

The Members of the Lake County State's Attorney's Office's Young Ambassador Board are dedicated to serving and empowering their peers in our community. The Young Ambassadors will lead by example and work together throughout Lake County.

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Welcome,

Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United State Said: "The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people."

Respecting others while at the same time valuing your own beliefs is an essential characteristic. Thinking independently is important and it helps us to become our own advocate. Be your own person. Respect others and advocate for what you believe in. I learn every day from the youth I encounter. Our differences are our greatest asset. Learn from them.

The opportunity to serve the people of Lake County has been one of my greatest successes. I love going to work every day, and I value the significant role I am able to play in advocating for the citizens of Lake County. I look forward to making you part of the Lake County State's Attorney's Office family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. G. Nerheim".

Sincerely,

Michael G. Nerheim





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Role of the Lake County State's Attorney "Seeking Justice"

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Lake County State's Attorney's Office. I am humbled every day to be able to serve the people of Lake County and hope you will take the time to learn more about the duties of our office. The Lake County State's Attorney's Office consists of a highly trained and skilled staff dedicated to keeping Lake County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family. I am challenged daily to do the best I can as your State's Attorney, and to empower the staff to represent the fabric of our communities in the best way possible. A summary of our aims and values is defined in our mission statement below:

The Lake County State's Attorney's Office is dedicated to the following principles: to seek justice with integrity by vigorously and ethically prosecuting criminal acts, with empathy and compassion for the victims of crime and unwavering respect for the rights of the accused; to protect the people of Lake County by working with our criminal justice partners to make our communities safe; and to provide exceptional and professional legal representation to Lake County and its elected and appointed officials, thereby promoting responsible and trustworthy government.

Seeking justice—whether it be through prosecuting cases, developing preventive solutions for fighting crime, educating youth in our communities, collecting child support, or fostering government transparency—is something I continue to promise to uphold. As your State's Attorney, and as the primary catalyst for the responsibilities our office holds, I do not take these things for granted.

Growing up in Waukegan, I learned firsthand the importance of hard work, the value of diversity, and the power of community involvement. I bring those values to work with me every day. Collaborating with individuals and organizations in the community is key to our success. When community leaders, social service agencies, and leaders from the public and private sector come together and work towards common missions we maximize our potential for keeping Lake County a safe place to live.

Our partners in our mission to seek justice keep vital channels of communication open to us. Our office is committed to hearing from you, and we take pride in educating the community about our role.

On behalf of the Lake County State's Attorney's Office, I thank you for allowing us to serve you.



Mike Nerheim



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How it all Began

In the fall of 2017 the Lake County State's Attorney's Office launched a Youth Group bringing together Junior High and High School age children. Notice of this program was distributed to all schools throughout Lake County. Our Office received a fantastic response!

"Our objective is to motivate and inspire our young leaders. We look forward to having meaningful engagements with the youth as our equal partners in decision making processes. Adults tend to spend too much time talking at youth, and very little hearing from them. We want to hear their ideas and allow them the opportunity to have input on how we can be more effective" said Mr. Nerheim. The intent is to bring the youth together as partners of the office in developing new programs, while providing feedback on our current prevention programs for the community.

The initial youths who participated in our program attended three training sessions as part of becoming members of the Program. The sessions were intended to inspire them to make a change for their community and peers and to serve as a forum for us to seek their input in building the program.

Members are expected to be an active member of the board, participate in the Community Awareness Program (CAP) through projects, provide awareness to their peers and community about prevention programs. As a participant, there will be open dialogue with our office as to how we can better educate and assist our youth.

In turn, the LCSAO will provide community service hours if needed, presentations on key topics, and opportunities for the members to be mentors for their peers within the community. By creating this program and making young people into our partners, with the Lake County State's Attorney's Office, is bridging the generational gap!



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Mission Statement

The members of the Young Ambassador Board of the Lake County State's Attorney's Office are dedicated to serving and empowering their peers in our community. The Young Ambassadors will lead by example and work together throughout Lake County.

Young Ambassadors

The State's Attorney's Office is looking to motivate and inspire our young leaders. The Young Ambassadors will serve as a forum to effectively deal with issues that especially impact youth in Lake County. Young Ambassadors will be our partners in developing programs and will provide insight on existing efforts to engage the young people of Lake County.

Membership Benefits

Young Ambassadors will be involved in various projects and activities to bring awareness to their schools and communities. They will also be a voice on issues and trends that affect them and their peers directly. By being a member, the youth will grow in the following areas:

- Leadership
- Gratitude and Good Citizenship
- A Voice to Community Awareness/Prevention Programs
- Service to their Peers and their Community
- Personal Growth and Confidence
- Lake County State's Attorney's Office Experience

We sincerely hope you will take this opportunity to make a difference and become a leader in your community. We look forward to you becoming a Young Ambassador Partner and offering your input to the employees of our Lake County State's Attorney's Office. Please feel free to contact the program's Facilitators: Melissa Burke 847-377-3000 / mburke@lakecountyil.gov, or Carrie Wings, 847-377-7824 cwings@lakecountyil.gov

"Each of us can make a difference. Together we make change." ~ Barbara Mikuiski



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Requirements to be a Member:

- Resident of Lake County.
- Student in grade 8 through 12.
- Student must complete an application and essay.
- Student must commit to meetings throughout the school year.
- Members will come together as a Board at least 5 times throughout the school year.
 - Member are expected to attend meetings.
 - Facilitators will provide opportunities for speakers, trainings, focus groups and other occasions for the youth to become engaged.
 - Facilitators will provide an environment to the youth that invites dialogue, ideas, and feedback for the State's Attorney's Office on prevention and programs.
- Members will be required to be a part of at least one Community Awareness Program (CAP) and implement a project with Lake County.
 - CAP will meet on the opposite month of the board meetings
 - Community Awareness Programs are:
 - Teen Dating Violence/Healthy Relationships
 - Bee Safe Program
 - Anti-Bullying Program
 - Cyber Safety Program
 - Anti-Gang, Drug, and Alcohol Program
 - CAP meetings will be conducted with the co-facilitators along with an adult mentor from The Lake County State's Attorney's Office. These meetings will address the members interest in one of the above programs and how to implement their project idea within the community.
 - Project Ideas:
 - One project could be presented within a school(or)
 - One project could be presented within the Lake County community
- Community Service Hours will be offered to those who need them; hours will be coordinated with the facilitators.
- Members are encouraged to participate in Lake County State's Attorney's Office summer events.



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Community Awareness Program (CAP) Overview

Each program is part of the community prevention and education program of the Lake County State's Attorney's Office. The programs are designed to assist schools, our youth, service providers, and our community. When considering which program you wish to be a part of we ask that you think about the area you hope to make a difference for both your peers and the LCSAO as a YAB member.

- **Teen Dating Violence/Healthy Relationships:** Teen Dating Violence affects teens from all backgrounds. These committee members will work on educating their peers, and on being a voice to our office about the danger of dating violence and the importance of a healthy relationship.
- **Bee Safe:** This subcommittee is designed to educate our community on our younger youth who witness domestic violence within their home or neighborhood. The program is designed to educate the community/schools on how domestic violence affects children. For our younger community members we hope to provide them safety guidelines and to recognize a safe person to speak to.
- **Anti-Bullying Program:** Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among two or more people that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. This program is designed to assist our community in the pledge to "Rise-Above" bullying through education, materials, and presentations.
- **Cyber Safety:** The internet provides a world of opportunities. However, with endless opportunities also come risks. This program educates the youth and community about the dangers of the cyber world and how to protect themselves and be safe.
- **Anti-Gang & Drug/Alcohol Prevention:** This committee will discuss and educate on the risks, harms, and dangers of substance abuse along with discuss, gangs and the dangers they pose.



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LCSAO-YAB Committee Chairs

Eight members will be chosen to Chair the following four committees:

1. Young Ambassadors Community Relations
2. Community Awareness Program (CAP)
3. Lake County Children's Advocacy Center
4. Young Ambassadors Communications

Chairs to these committees will assist the facilitators and mentors regarding most of the YAB communications, event planning, and all Board and CAP meetings. Aside from the mentors, the Chairs will be a contact point for all YAB members. Communication and planning will be a free flow between the Chairs and YAB members.

*Member contact information will be shared with the Chairs of each Committee.

Expectations of a Chair:

- Good Communication Skills
- Good Organization Skills
- Must attend all Full Board and CAP meetings
- Be accessible to all YAB members
- Continuous communication between YAB members and facilitators
- May have to attend additional planning meetings with facilitators
- Will assist in coordination with projects, fundraisers, community events, and volunteer hours
- Will recruit YAB member for any special projects
- Will assist in encouraging and motivating YAB members

Once the Chairs are announced a meeting will be held to review specific chairperson duties with the facilitators.



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Open enrollment for the Lake County State's Attorney's Office Young Ambassadors Board (LCSAO-YAB) is sent to the Superintendent of each Junior High and High School throughout Lake County. Additionally, the Lake County State's Attorney's Office will release the application through a press release and post it on the LCSAO website.

**Why fit in
when you were born to
STAND OUT!
--Dr. Seuss**