

PUERTO RICAN/HISPANIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (PR/HYLI) – QUESTAR III BOCES

Year 1 Evaluation Summary

June 2023

Key Evaluation Activities

What has happened in Year 1?



Findings

What have we learned?



Recommendations

What comes next?





Introduction

This past year, the Angelo Del Toro Puerto Rican/Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (PR/HYLI) completed its 33rd year of youth development and mock assembly experiences. This year's theme was, “**Defending Our Democracy**”.



Headed by Questar III BOCES (Questar), participation in the PR/HYLI consisted of 3 stages:

- Completing **30 hours** of Home Delegation Trainings,
- Attending **2.5 days** of the Albany Conference Weekend, and
- Participating in **countless opportunities** to further learning through Community Continuation (for some delegates this includes a trip to Washington, D.C.)

This year, Questar selected Via Evaluation (VIA) as the evaluator and collaboratively created an evaluation plan to measure the project's progress towards the goals and focus areas of the grant across all program stages. This report summarizes these efforts, results, and the recommendations for future evaluation strategies.



KEY EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Planned Evaluation Activities for Year 1



Key Evaluation Activities

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KEY EVALUATION ACTIVITIES



- 01 Information Gathering**

Key staff were identified for interviews to collect information about the history of the program to inform programming alignment prior to the Albany Conference weekend.
- 02 Workshop Observations**

During the Albany Conference weekend, all workshop sessions were observed. The observation tool was aligned to the intended focus areas of the project.
- 03 Informal Student Feedback**

During the Cultural Networking Event hosted during the conference, student feedback was collected on across 4 questions regarding student experiences and takeaways from the
- 04 Surveys of Youth Participants**

At the end of the Albany Conference weekend, surveys were administered to all students to assess their learning and development, while also collecting general feedback on the weekend and the overall institute experience. Surveys were also collected from students who

FINDINGS

Learnings and Feedback from Evaluation Activities



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Overall Participation

233 Students attended the Albany conference weekend,

after receiving a minimum of **3** hours of leadership, public speaking,

and state legislative trainings. Participants came from **7** home delegations the

spanning the state of New York.



174 participants provided feedback on their PR/HYLI experience
(75%)

through an anonymous survey after attending one **10** student
of leadership



training workshops and participating in the Mock
Assembly.

*Note: Given the small sample size of the data collected during key staff interviews, the responses cannot be shared but are incorporated into the findings and recommendations.



Workshop Observations

During the 10 student leadership training workshops, VIA observed every session for a minimum of 10 minutes. Using a tool developed to capture the sessions' alignment to the intended focused areas of the project overall and youth learning and development, evaluators summarized the workshop events and identified a main takeaway and area for improvement:

- Workshops with **explicitly stated goals** for the activity, presented to students with an **evident connection** to the skills they would develop, appeared to have **more opportunities** for students to **build the relevant skills**.
- Students may need **extra support to remain engaged** in the overall activity with tasks that are **relevant to the skill building and development focus areas** of the institute, especially when separating from the group to do more individual work.

PR/HYLI OBSERVATION

Date: _____ Event Location: _____

Workshop Name: _____

Staff present: _____

Total Participation: _____

Event Summary

Overall Atmosphere & Engagement

Data Collection & Evaluation Related Activities (Attendance, Informal Feedback, Surveys)

Youth Learning & Skill Development (Public Speaking, Critical Thinking, Debating, Leadership)

Staffing



Informal Student Feedback Questions

During the Albany Conference weekend, students attended a Cultural Networking Event where they had the opportunity to mingle and meet with other delegates. The posters shown below were set up to ask for informal feedback on sticky-notes as the students circulated throughout the night.

How has your experience at PR/HYLI impacted you?



What is your biggest takeaway from PR/HYLI?



What are you excited to bring back to your community from PR/HYLI?



What future goals have you set for yourself since participating in PR/HYLI?





Informal Student Feedback

How has your experience at PR/HYLI impacted you?

PRHYLI has helped me improve my **leadership abilities** and my abilities to **express my opinion**.

PRHYLI has made me a **more confident public speaker** and has introduced me to so many new people.

My experience at PRHYLI has been **incredible**, I have met a lot of people and **leaders who have impacted and inspired me**

What is your biggest takeaway from PR/HYLI?

Don't be afraid to **speak your MIND**

My biggest takeaway was that the Latino community is **always helping each other**.

PRHYLI to me was an eye opener – **proud Latina**

What are you excited to bring back to your community from PR/HYLI?

Getting **out of my comfort zone** more often.

I'm excited to bring back **public speaking skills & advocacy skills**.

New experiences.

What future goals have you set for yourself since participating in PR/HYLI?

Be a **more active leader** in my community.

I plan on **voting**.

I want to change my community in a **positive way**.





Youth Participant Survey – Post Conference

At the end of the Albany Conference weekend, paper surveys were disseminated by PR/HLYI staff to students. The first part of the survey was intended to collect general student satisfaction with their experiences both at the conference weekend and during their Home Delegation Trainings.

98% of respondents said PR/HYLI was a **positive experience!**

Overall, my experience participating in PR/HYLI was positive.

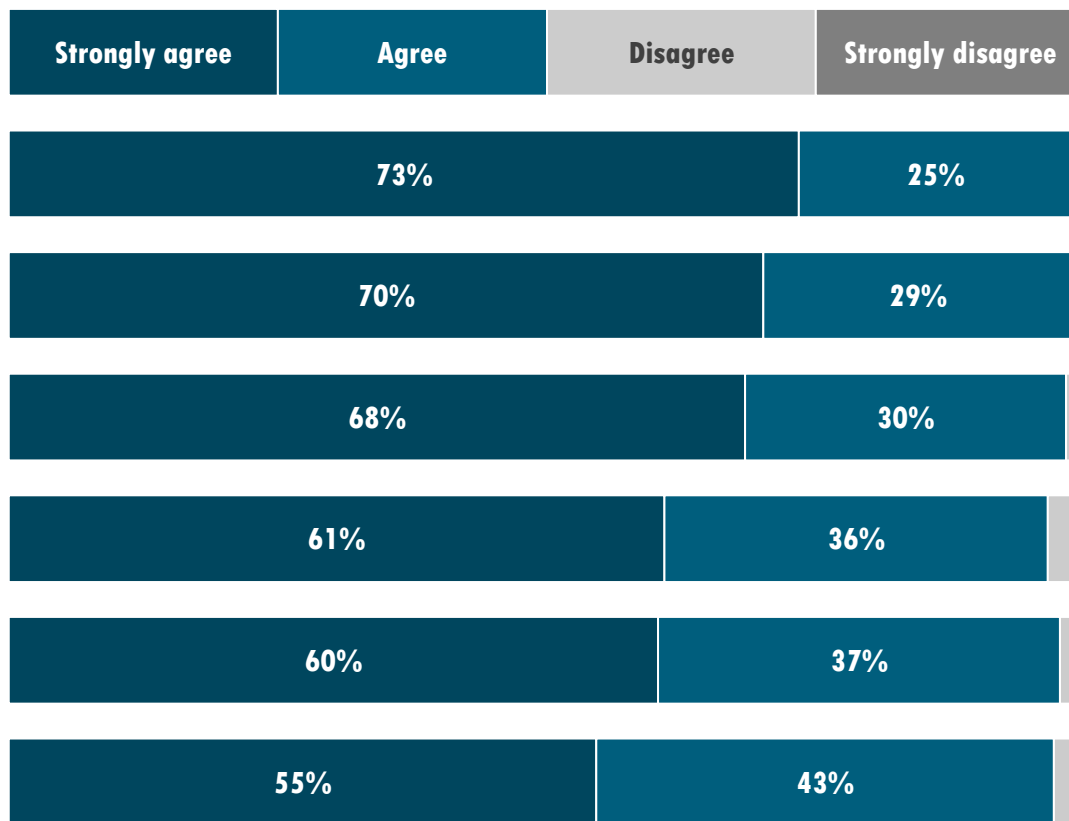
I enjoyed meeting students from other delegations at the Institute.

Overall, I am satisfied with my experience at the Institute.

I learned a lot during the training with my regional delegation.

The activities at the Institute were interesting.

The speakers at the Institute were engaging.



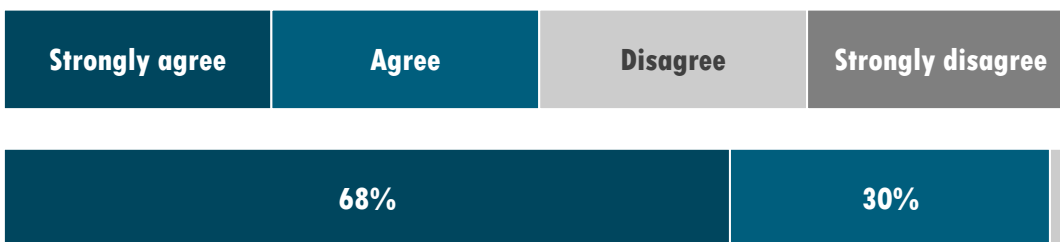


Youth Participant Survey – Post Conference

The second part of the survey looked to measure students' knowledge and skill acquisition. These questions focused on youth development and learning across the grant's intended goals and focus areas: public speaking, critical thinking, and debate skills.

98% of respondents said PR/HYLI helped them consider other points of view

After participating in PR/HYLI, I understand more about issues affecting the Hispanic community.



After participating in PR/HYLI, I am more prepared to be a leader in my community.



After participating in PR/HYLI, I am better able to consider other viewpoints.



After participating in PR/HYLI, I am better able to think critically.



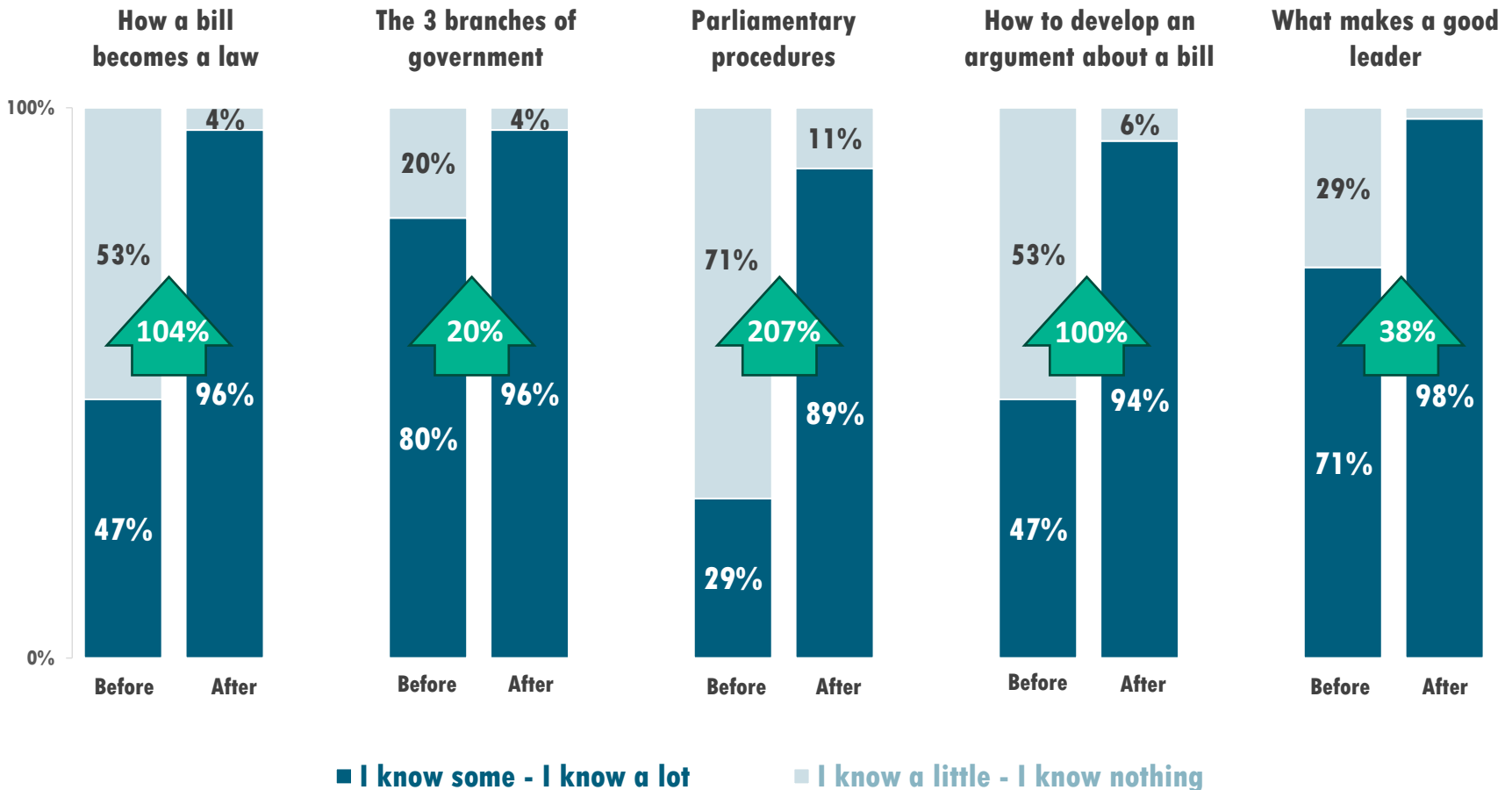
After participating in PR/HYLI, I am more interested in learning about how government works.





Youth Participant Survey – Post Conference

The third part of the survey looked to measure the impact of PR/HYLI on student knowledge. These questions were aligned to the curriculum students followed during the Home Delegation trainings and the activities they participated in during the conference.





Youth Participant Survey – Post Conference

The final section of the survey provided a space for students to respond to open-ended questions. Students reflected on what they liked best about PR/HYLI and what would make PR/HYLI better. Participants were also asked to share an experience where they used what they learned from PR/HYLI and how they would use their new skills in the future, along with general thoughts.

In AP Gov we needed to debate for the 1st time... and I knew how to create an argument.

I see myself **defending my points more clearly** while also truly listening to the opposing side. I also see myself **feeling confident** no matter if I am the only latina in the room.

I loved how **fun it was to learn**. PR/HYLI made me learn so many new things in such an **engaging [way]**, which was a great experience.

It would be better if all delegates have a certain **time to share their thoughts in Assembly** and by that we would hear more points of view.

At the mock trial I was able to argue and defend my position using the **vision, organization, voice, and action** that I learned from my workshop about freedom dreaming

I will use what I learned in PRHYLI to be an **active leader and citizen**.

I liked the ability to **improve my public speaking**, meet new people, and **learn about our government**.

I have never felt more **comfortable in my own skin** in my entire life and it's because of this program.





Youth Participant Survey – Post DC

From June 4th – 6th, 21 PR/HYLI participants (3 from each delegation) traveled to Washington, D.C. Students met with congressional representatives, toured the capital, and continued to learn about government while developing their leadership and advocacy skills. Students were asked to share feedback on their experience and in the first part of the survey, they provided responses to questions related to their satisfaction.

100% of participants said the trip was a **positive experience** and they **learned a lot**

I learned a lot during the meetings with NY congressional representatives.



I enjoyed visiting Washington, D.C. monuments and landmarks.



My experiences in PR/HYLI this year prepared me to meet with the congressional representatives.



My experiences in PR/HYLI this year helped me appreciate the activities during the Washington, D.C. trip.



Overall, visiting Washington, D.C. was a positive experience.





Youth Participant Survey – Post DC

The second part of the survey looked to measure students' continued knowledge and skill acquisition. These questions focused on youth development and learning across the grant's intended goals and focus areas now that students had completed their DC experience.

100% of participants said their **critical thinking** ability improved as a result of the trip

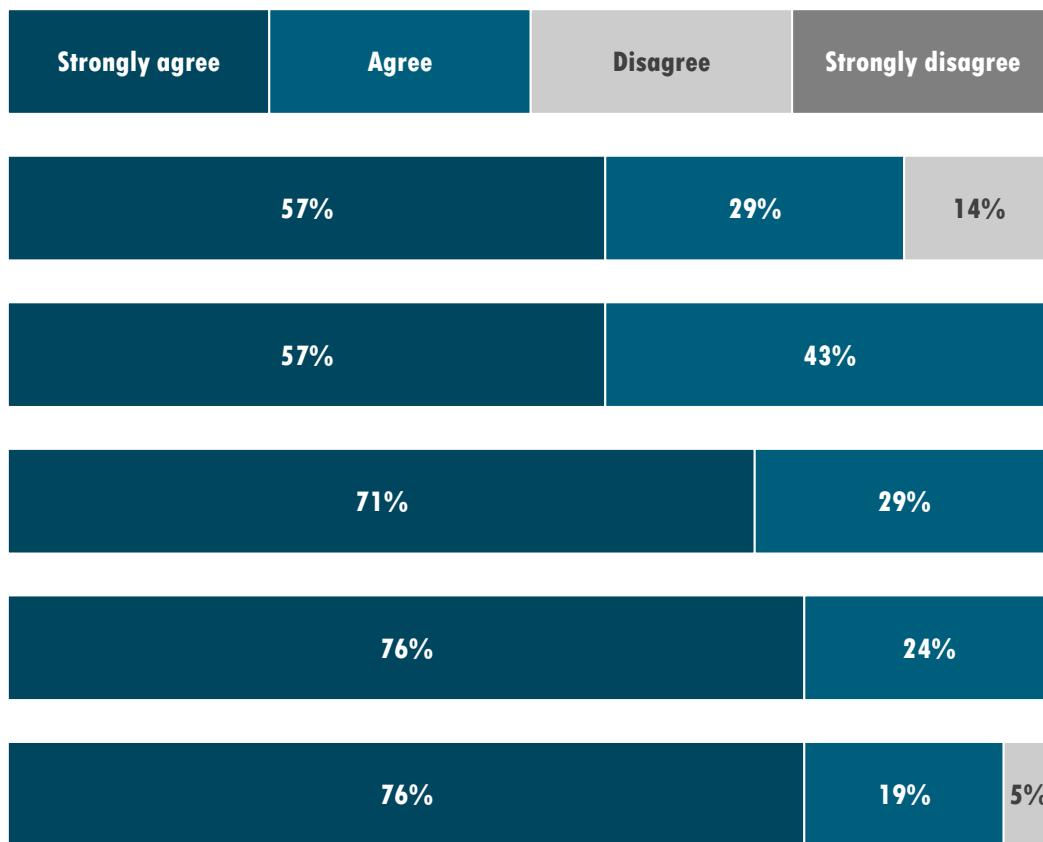
After visiting Washington, D.C., I am more interested in learning about how government works.

After meeting with congressional representatives in Washington, D.C., I understand more about issues affecting the Hispanic community.

After the experiences during the Washington, D.C. trip, I am better able to think critically.

After the experiences during the Washington, D.C. trip, I am better able to consider other viewpoints.

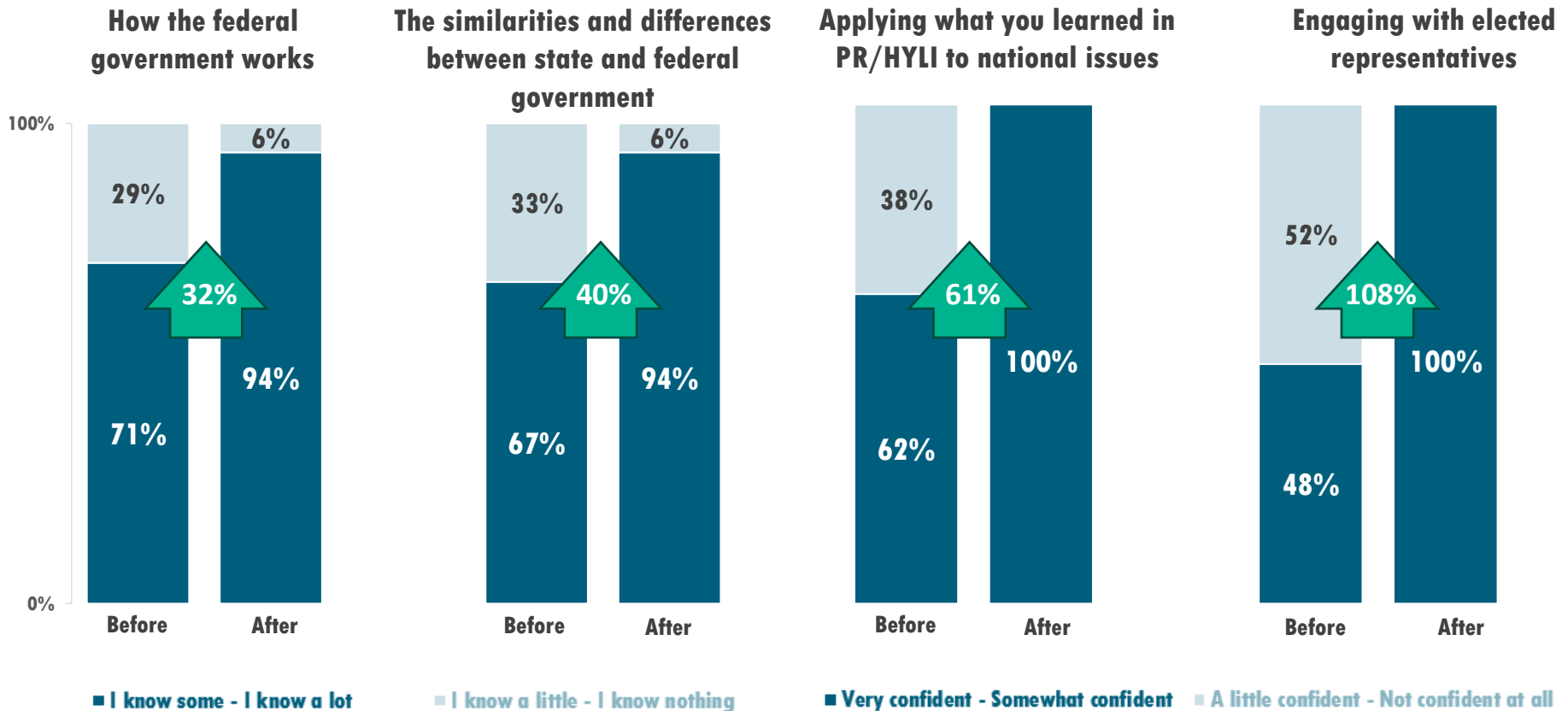
After the experiences during the Washington, D.C. trip, I am more prepared to be a leader in my community.





Youth Participant Survey – Post DC

The third part of the survey looked to measure the impact of the Washington, D.C. trip on student knowledge and confidence. These questions were related to student learning around the federal government and confidence engaging with elected officials.





Youth Participant Survey – Post DC

Finally, students were provided a space to respond to open-ended questions around their likes and suggested improvements. The students were also asked to share an experience where they used what they learned from PR/HYLI during the trip, along with general thoughts.

I loved **all the learning**, sight-seeing, fun facts, and being with friends

I would have liked to see more museums.

I used my voice to **advocate for my community** to ask the representatives questions that affect my community

I loved it very much – it was an **incredible experience**, very fun & educational/informative

Everything was amazing – the [dinner] cruise, monuments, people, everything

Inside the White House!! But it's hard to get in I know

I am a **better advocate**.

I enjoyed how we learned about the country in so little time.

I like talking to the congress people.

A little more freedom to interact between ourselves at the hotel.

I was more **confident speaking**.

It was an amazing trip and opportunity that I am very grateful for. Thank you!!!



KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

What can be adjusted to improve the future of PR/HYLI?



Key Evaluation Activities

What has happened in Year 1?



Findings

What have we learned?



Recommendations

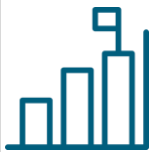
What comes next for PR/HYLI?

KEY FINDINGS



PR/HYLI students felt a sense of belonging.

The conference weekend served as a welcoming environment for students to socialize and learn. Students shared many comments on the incomparable joy and support they felt during the weekend, many for the first time. PR/HYLI has built a space where students can feel they belong



Youth learning & development goals were met.

Students reported overwhelmingly positive results on their personal skill development and learning. The curriculum followed during home delegation trainings prepared students with the legislative knowledge needed to participate while the mock assembly provided an opportunity for



Student voice can support programmatic improvements.

Using the feedback provided by students, PR/HYLI can ensure the conference activities reflect student voice and encourage participation throughout all the events. Staff, trainer, and chaperone feedback may also help identify areas

RECOMMENDATIONS



Restructure & condense the student feedback survey

to be delivered after home delegation trainings and the conference weekend. This will ensure more specifically aligned feedback to the recent experiences. The surveys should contain questions tailored to the grant's identified goals while also collecting relevant information to the completed activities.



Create a networking & internship contact repository

to support students' newly found confidence and continued leadership skill development. Students were excited to bring what they learned at PR/HYLI back to their communities but did not offer many concrete examples on how, when, and where they would do so. This repository will help them take the next step.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Ask for trainer, staff, and chaperone feedback

to help coordinate and support planning logistics in the future, identify potential areas of improvement, and instill a sense of value and trust in the trainers who support the program.



Share out feedback information and data

to ensure a reciprocal and trusting relationship is sustained. Building trust with youth is especially important in a program centered around students' experience. PR/HYLI has created a welcoming environment, instilling a sense of belonging in many participants that can continue to grow as they see the data and publicly shared reports.

NEXT STEPS



Create Year 2 evaluation plan

to establish a timeline for project activities and guide the work and expectations moving forward.



Follow up on Year 1 recommendations

to ensure edits are made to student surveys to be delivered after Home Delegation trainings and the conference weekend.



Plan for Home Delegation site visits

to observe curriculum implementation and fidelity. Visiting various sites will also ensure consistency in learning and achieving the desired goals for students.



Consider interactive student feedback

at the next Albany Conference weekend. Using a creative and interactive evaluation technique, like Photo Voice, will help engage students in the evaluation process.