



# News Release

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## **Future Native Conservation Leaders Are Encouraged to Apply for the Native Youth Climate Adaptation Leadership Congress**

The National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia is hosting the annual Native Youth Climate Adaptation Leadership Congress (NYCALC), starting June 25 – June 30, 2023. The mission of NYCALC is to develop future Indigenous conservation leaders with skills, knowledge, and tools to address environmental change to better serve their schools and home communities.

Students will explore culture, tradition, and science to answer a “big question” posed at the beginning of the week. Last year’s “big question” was, “How can Indigenous knowledge systems and western science collectively address climate change and other environmental issues?” Through addressing the “big question,” students will lead the congress to focus on major challenges in their communities. The students create themes based on their answers to the big question. These themes can emphasize the importance of language, elders, political involvement, traditional values, cultural preservation, economic sustainability, and environmental awareness.

*“It was amazing to meet people from other tribes and there's so much to learn about culture.”  
“I felt very safe. It helped me find who I was. It made me secure in my culture and cherish it.”  
~ High School Students, 2022*

Requirements for Indigenous youth groups interested in joining the Native Youth Congress should have between 3-5 students, be rising high school seniors (sophomores and juniors will be considered on a case-by-case basis) and be a part of a federally recognized Native American tribe or Native American based Indigenous group.

**Applications for this program can be found at [NYCALC.org](http://NYCALC.org) and will be accepted December 1<sup>st</sup> - February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

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