



# YYGSBOOK

Yale  
YOUNG  
GLOBAL  
SCHOLARS

# Foreword

I am honored to pen the foreword of the YYGSBook, a compilation of recollections from past YYGS participants about their experiences in both applying to and participating in the Yale Young Global Scholars Program (YYGS).

First and foremost, I want to thank Abdul Moiz Munir for his steadfast dedication to this project – in terms of spearheading the concept, soliciting submissions, and seeing it to completion. This book would not exist were it not for his persevering efforts.

YYGS is a unique program, not only because of the diversity of speakers and instructors that we enlist, but above all, because of the diversity of opinions and ideas that come together when student participants from all corners of the globe have an opportunity to interact with one another. YYGS students are a special breed, and this project is just one of the many examples of the enterprising, generous, and creative spirit that is true of all YYGS alums.

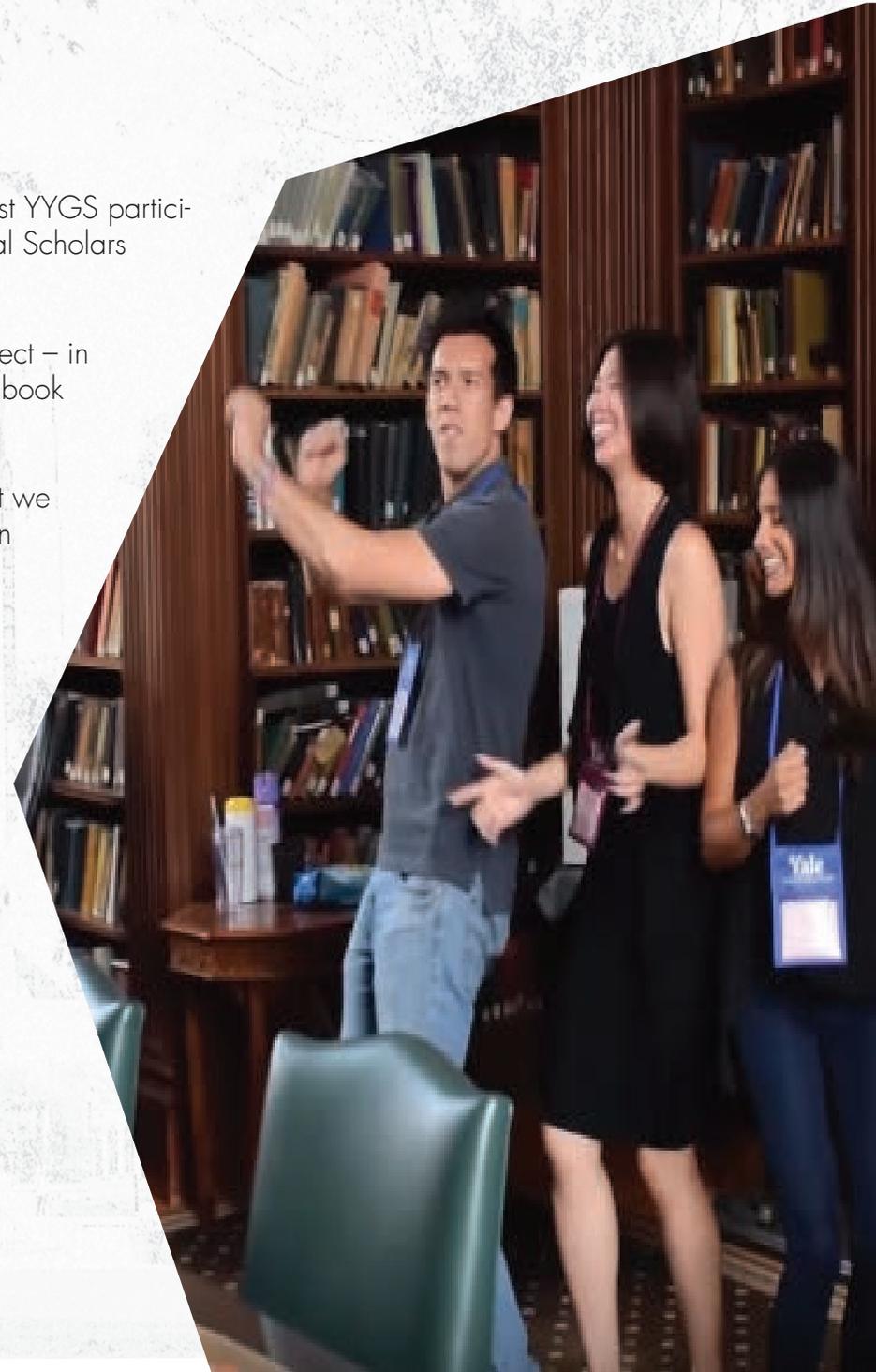
I hope that this book serves as both a time capsule for those who participated to remember and reflect upon the two weeks they spent here at Yale, but also as a resource and a guide to the many generations of future Global Scholars who aspire to also have that experience. We believe that as YYGS grows, we will continue to expand our mission of education access to more and more communities, and make this opportunity a reality for every talented and deserving student from around the world.

Our global family is a community of friends and scholars. We sincerely hope that you will become a part of our family too!

**Daniel Tam-Claiborne**

Asia Project Manager

Yale Young Global Scholars Program



# Jiayi Vivian Li

## China - Shanghai Foreign Language School

### Introduction

Hi Future YGGSers, I'm Jiayi Li (Preferred name: Vivian) from Shanghai, China. I attended IAS 2016 as a rising senior. I'm super into MUN, writing, Shakespeare's drama, translation, traveling, watching sports game (especially soccer and tennis.), and Madam Secretary.

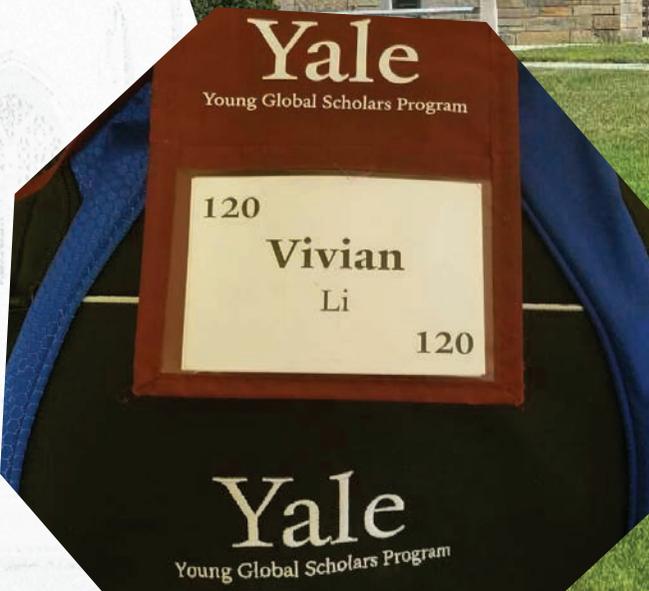
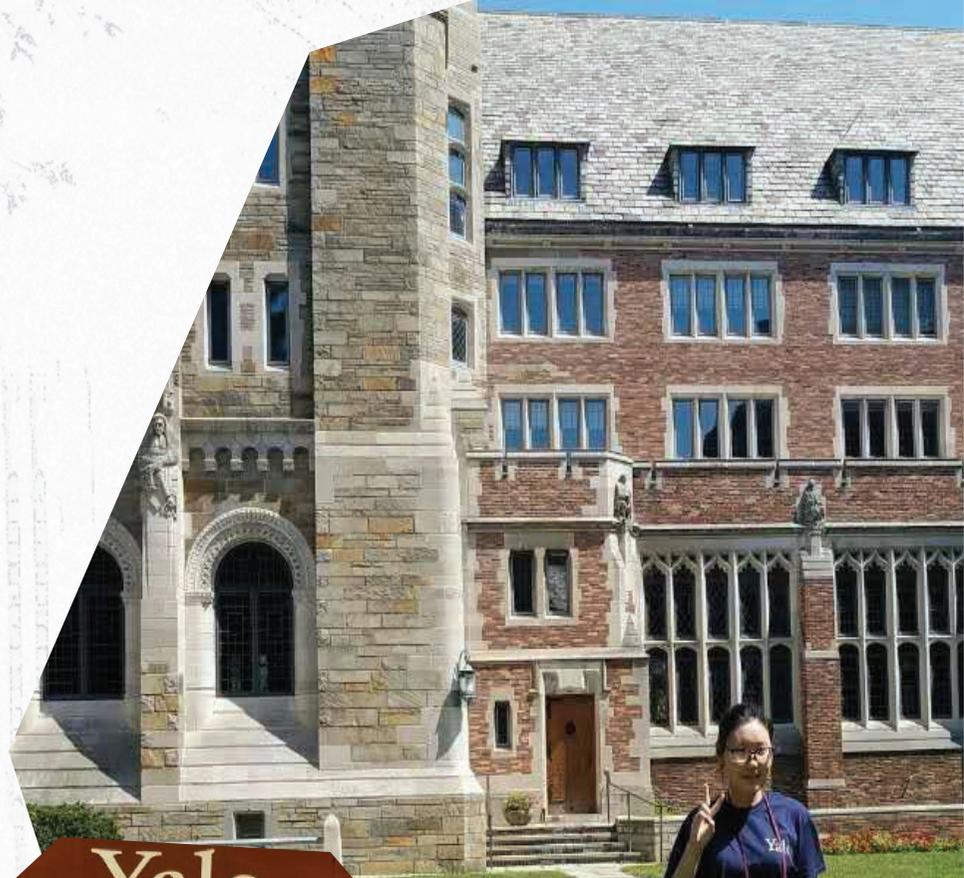
### Advice

First and foremost: RESPECT  
I. DO NOT write application essays in the night before deadline like me.  
II. Show your passion and desire in politics and learning from others; find strong people who really know you for recommendation letters; don't care about standardized tests—I was admitted even though mine is below average.  
III. For International students: Better to be an IB Student, so you can talk and complain your HL, SL and whatever essays for hours.

IV. There is a piano in the basement—be prepared.  
V: ECs must be relevant to the program you apply.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is reachable and unreachable; a place that urged me to use Facebook; a place where I dared to raise my own opinion and was agreed with by some students; a place that solidified my dream to study Polisci in college even if I'm an international student; a place where I heard so many heartbroken, sympathetic and inspirational stories.



# Damare Baker

USA - Mississippi School for Math and Science

## Introduction

Hiya! My name is Damare Baker and I was a member of YYGS-IAS 2016. I am an aspiring polyglot, organization freak, and hopefully, a future Yale graduate.

## Advice

I have one piece of advice for YYGS applicants: be yourself. While you're applying, you may have thoughts like, "Oh, I'm not good enough." or "There are way more capable students than me." Completely erase those thoughts from your head because they won't help you get into this amazing program. If you're truly passionate about getting into YYGS, then you will get into YYGS. They want someone who isn't afraid to show their true colors. Someone who isn't afraid to speak their mind. Someone like you. When writing your essay and short answer responses, make sure your voice shines through. They want to know who you are, not anyone else. I'm pretty sure you're a fantastic person, so don't stress too much.

Good luck!

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a second home. Even though I have only been there for two weeks, it felt like I've been there forever. Yale gave me a sense of community that I haven't felt in a long time and I wouldn't trade my two weeks there for anything in the world. Yale is going to Insomnia Cookies after a long day of work. Yale is singing Happy Birthday in the cafeteria to the lucky student who has an embarrassed smile on their face. Yale is opening your eyes to a whole new perspective. Like I said earlier, Yale is home.



# Elizavetta Sergeevna Fursova

Russia/U.S.A - Anglo-American School of Moscow

## Introduction

My name is Liz Fursova and I am half Russian, half American, currently living in Moscow, Russia, and attending an international school.

## Advice

The first piece of advice I would give is not to procrastinate when completing the YYGS application. I began applying months before the deadline, which gave me more than enough time not only to decide on the specific session that I wanted to attend but also to write, edit, and re-write my essays. As for the application itself, I recommend that you submit a resume instead of listing activities and extracurriculars. Resumes, in my opinion, make the applicant seem more prepared and thus more professional. Make sure the resume isn't too long (don't include every single activity you have been a part of since the first day of high school), but do be sure to include every meaningful or noteworthy activity since 9th grade.

Regarding the program itself, whether you are traveling from abroad or not, I would suggest that you arrive a day early (if possible). That way you can familiarize yourself with the area and the Yale campus itself. Also, arriving early will allow you to go off bounds and explore New Haven more than you will be able to during the program. If you are a gym-goer you might feel tempted to get a gym membership: unless you like to wake up early and believe you can manage your time, don't. Finally, prioritize your seminar readings above the lecture readings and be sure to take notes.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a historic and prestigious institution filled with bright minds of all races and cultures. The diversity of students and professors at Yale is unlike that of any other university I have visited, and even as someone coming from an international school, I was surprised to see a myriad of countries represented.



## Samantha Chun

USA - The Seven Hills School

### Introduction

During YYGS2016, you could find me running unnecessarily at the same pace I walk. If I were to meet you on the Yale campus, I'd probably say something along the lines of: "I don't believe we've met! I'm from Cincinnati, Ohio— Midwestern America, you know?" and extend my hand for a nice handshake. By this point, many people from IAS2016 would know who I am, but as we may never meet, I'll introduce myself more straightforwardly: my name is Sam Chun, I'm a rising senior, and you can hit me up on the gram @samyc98 :)))

### Advice

On a more serious note, YYGS is an incredible opportunity that any young student searching to expand her or his world should try to take advantage of. In order to do this, of course, one must create a compelling application. Thus, I'll offer a little advice I hope you'll find helpful: although a good transcript and test scores are nice accessories, YYGS is looking for a special kind of scholar.

Show an honest willingness to broaden your world in essays, and you'll demonstrate qualities that application readers are looking for. I also think it's important to let readers know what you can bring to the table at YYGS. This doesn't mean you must be a genius or from a faraway country or a CEO of your own company (though I did meet many people that fulfilled this criteria at IAS); it's as easy as being willing to share your viewpoint on issues or make friends. Putting in a little extra effort towards those essays is a decision you won't regret! After all, your summer at Yale will be very special.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a place of opportunity. The university provided a venue for me to experience so many things I never had a chance to do before. I discussed International Affairs with genuinely interested, well-informed people and learned a wealth of new knowledge from incredible lecturing professors and wonderful seminar leaders. However, the highlight of the experience was my fellow peers.

I met people from over 100 countries across the globe and made wonderful relationships that I hope to keep for a long time. I came to YYGS with the goal of building political connections with potential leaders, but left with an incredibly diverse set of new friends who taught me so much, whether it be elementary Swahili vocabulary, the basics of Argentine dancing, or simple cultural differences. In short, Yale broadened my worldview without taking me out of my own country... in just two short weeks.



# William Acheampong

USA - Bellaire HS

## Introduction

Hi, My name is William Acheampong. I am a senior at Bellaire High School in Bellaire, Texas and, as you probably noticed, I have an unusual last name - Acheampong. My father is from Ghana, a thriving nation in West Africa. In this guide, you will read about other YYGS scholars who too have unusual last names and have vibrant cultural backgrounds.

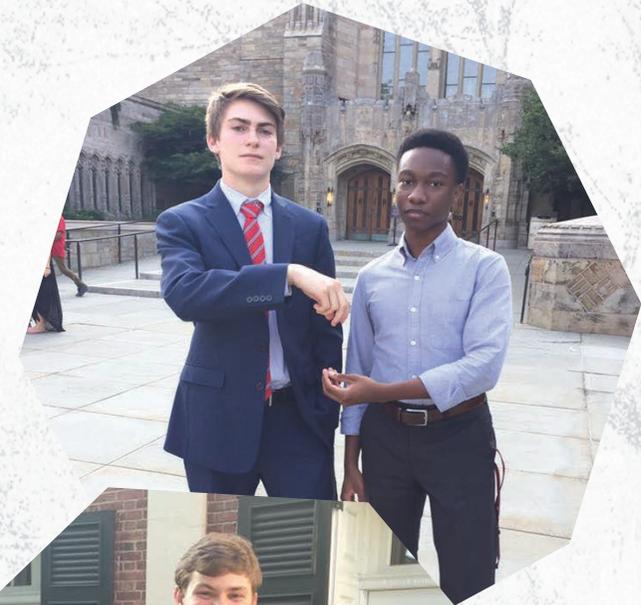
## Advice

YYGS International Security and Affairs was a life-changing experience for me. If you have the opportunity to be apart of any YYGS session, take that opportunity! Through YYGS, you will have the unique opportunity to meet and become close with some of the world's most brilliant minds, impactful leaders and innovative thinkers of tomorrow. While in New Haven attending the program, make sure you open up and meet as many people as you can. The ability to come face to face with students from all reaches of the global is an opportunity you cannot take lightly. My biggest pieces of advice for any

YYGS applicant is to be yourself, demonstrate your intellectual curiosity and be willing to have room for growth.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a place where I can grow not only intellectually, but also socially and culturally. Yale is a place where no matter who you are, where you come from and what you have accomplished, you can find a true home away from home. Make the most out of YYGS. If you are selected, you are there for a reason. Go out and find that reason!



# Raisha Waller

USA - Brooklyn Technical High School

## Introduction

Hi! I'm Raisha Waller from Brooklyn and I attended YYGS IAS 2016. I'm interested in cultural anthropology and linguistics, which has inspired me to engage in world politics and language learning. During the program, you could find me laughing at my own jokes, trying to buy 300 cookies at *Insomnia*, or smiling until I teared up because I was finally at my dream school.

## Advice

If you're looking to apply for YYGS, keep in mind that you're trying to get them to see what you can bring to the table. It won't matter if you haven't started ten NGOs or don't have a perfect SAT score if you show that you care about the subject of the session you're applying to. Display your abilities and your passion for learning. Be unique and be yourself! Let the people who read your application know that your voice is strong enough to stand out and be heard among the hundreds of other voices that they will hear in their summer at Yale.

If you can manage to communicate your curiosity and earnest love for what you want to do through a few short essays and a résumé, you'll be a wonderful candidate for YYGS. Keep in mind that YYGS will be one of your best opportunities to make useful connections, learn new things, and see the world through the eyes of hundreds of other people. Additionally, it can also be a time to figure out exactly what you want to do and how you're going to do it. The people you meet along the way will be incredibly rewarding to your growth as an intellectual and, simply, as a person. But in order to get this chance, you must show how important the program is to you and how important you can be to the course of the program. Once again, show that you can stand out and exhibit all the skills and knowledge you have to offer. YYGS is an incomparable experience and you have to try as hard to get in as the coordinators did to pack years of study into two weeks. And make sure they can tell how hard you tried!

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is an endless string of opportunities. Yale allowed me to explore my interests with the help of my mentors and peers. In just two weeks, I was exposed to hundreds of brilliant minds and allowed to engage in intellectual discussions and debates. I was given priceless advice from people who understand my position and want to help me succeed. Most importantly, I made lasting relationships that I will always treasure. I can only imagine what could unfold in four years of study surrounded by thousands of differing worldviews (especially on the most beautiful campus I've ever seen!)



# Jacinta Speer

## Australia

### Introduction

Hi! I'm Jacinta, although YYGS kids might know me better as Boomerang, Kangaroo or simply the Aussie kid. Fun fact: I like to eat politics pancakes with a drizzling of feminism and a side of cold debate for breakfast.

### Advice

Picture this. It's 9:00 am and I'm sitting in the local library, a bottle of iced tea in one hand and a towering stack of textbooks in front of me. I've been working on my philosophy homework, so all that's really running through my mind as I stretch absentmindedly is Descartes, Locke and Berkeley. Suddenly, my phone beeps. I automatically flip my phone over to check my notifications and my heart very nearly stops. There in unassuming black letters on my lockscreen are the words "Yale Young Global Scholars Program Application update". My hands are shaking as I swipe upwards to check, and I fumble as I type my username and password in-all the while reasoning that of course I wouldn't have gotten in it would just be a letter

saying sorry or something like-"Congratulations! You have been accepted into the International Affairs and Security You have been accepted to the International Affairs & Security (IAS) session of the Yale Young Global Scholars Program!"

I'll spare you the details, but let's just say my reaction involved me trying to clean iced tea off my shirt and not getting much more work done that day. What I'm trying to say, is that I definitely did not think I could get into YYGS. Coming from Australia, I absolutely thought of this program as a complete long shot. In fact, I completed the application more because I knew I would regret it if I didn't then out of any real expectation I could get in.

My biggest piece of advice would be to not underestimate yourself and apply. I wouldn't have spent two of the best weeks of my life with some of the most brilliant people I have ever met if I had underestimated myself. So, to borrow a cliché, what are you waiting for?

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is the place where I saw what my future could be. Before now, university has always been a distant, hazy concept, something ambiguous to strive for. Yet now, I can firmly see what my future could be like- it could be like YYGS-and I want that future. So, Yale is now more than a symbol, it's the concrete goal that motivates me. It is my dream, and I hope, my future.



## Ruichen Wu

China - The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

### Introduction

Innately optimistic, curious and compassionate while always critical— a tad academic— like reading history and literature— crazy soccer lover— piano player— that's me

### Advice

In retrospect, I think the crucial part of the whole application procedure is the essays. When I applied for IAS session of YYGS, I first looked back at my past, particularly the experience of encountering transcultural misunderstanding during several trips in the US and Europe. I closely examined how such unpleasant interaction impelled me to read plenty of books in history, IR, economics and politics where I strived to search for the root causes of transcultural misunderstanding and conflict. In addition to that, I further explained why this experience shaped me as a person who readily embraced diverse perspectives and aspired to become a diplomat in future. Although patently not good enough to be

self and I believed it did make me stand out among applicants.

With reference to and beyond my application experience, I advise future YYGS applicants to fully demonstrate their unique backgrounds, either cultural or personal when writing the application essays. Given that YYGS (especially IAS session) is a dynamic and diverse community in which every member contributes his or her own perspectives it is fairly important for you to articulate how you will exploit your uniqueness and transform this community rather than simply how intelligent or talented you are. You need to keep in mind the international nature of YYGS, which not only means the great cultural plurality spontaneously displayed by the entire group of students admitted, but also implies the critical responsibility of sharing unique ideas and opinions with others that each student should assume. Therefore, during the application process, you need to write down others as well as how your

others as well as how your uniqueness— your distinctive hobbies, your personality, your context, or your academic strengths might influence the YYGS community.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is Yale. To say it is something is the greatest disrespect to this university, for from my perspective and experience, Yale with its uniqueness transcends our arrogant inclination to put things under the control of verbal description. Two weeks' close observation and interaction conveyed to me that Yale always sincerely encourages its students to fulfill their potentials and manages to instill a sense of justice and social responsibility into them. Needless to say, at Yale one encounters the best campus environment and the most talented faculty and is always highly motivated to pursue his or her dream.



# Don Sandev Ferdinando

Sri Lanka/Qatar - Park House English School

## Introduction

I was born in Colombo, Sri Lanka on the 11th of January 2000, so growing up I've been exposed to both a conservative South Asian and liberal 'Western' perspective, which has shaped the way in which I approach various international issues and like any true IAS kid, I'm an MUN and Debate geek.

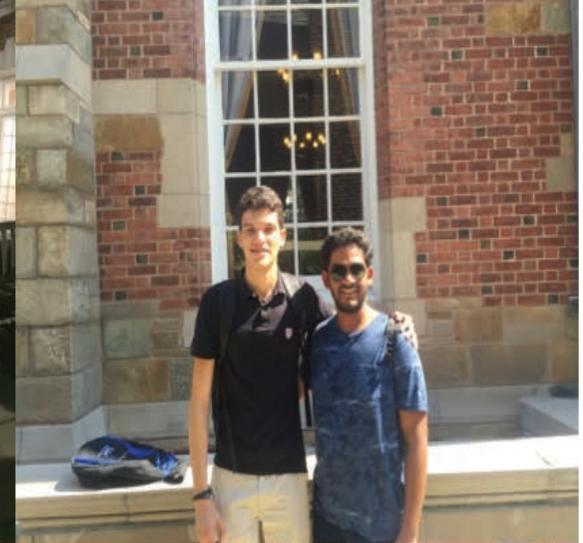
## Advice

In order for you to apply, you don't need to have been a part of ground breaking projects or have years of experience in what you do under your belt. Students who show's that they have made the most out of what is available in their community, that they have the willingness to go further and the determination to back it up, have and equal standing in the selection process. Lastly, when I applied, I had not taken any standardized tests, which led me to believe that it would be pointless for me to submit the application. But clearly I was wrong. The application is very long and will take you a while to complete, so

make sure that things like that don't get to you while you are completing the form.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is an intellects sanctuary where, no matter who you are or where you come from, you will be able to fit in and connect with others from every corner of the globe. It is an alternate universe located in a very quiet, small city, where you will have access to an unthinkable amount of information and find who you are and what you aspire to be in the process. Among its ancient buildings, is where your passion, dreams and goals will intertwine into one, to give you a sense of direction for many years to come.



# Ana Paula Linas Molina

Mexico



## Advice

Recently, I have been listening to the news about all the chaos that the world has been struggling with: war, discrimination, gender inequality between others. We teens, might think, "what can I do? I am about to go to University and I have no idea how to solve world hunger, I see people being killed in my country and I cannot do anything about it; but I feel so powerless to DO something..." The problem comes when we push ourselves back and think, "I can't. It is so complicated. I have so many things to do." and we come up with these stupid excuses, when in reality, our voice is the greatest weapon teens own in order to make a change in the world.

I would like to quote these immortal words said by an honourable man, husband and uncle to Peter Parker "With great power comes great responsibility". We all know Spiderman is a super hero. What do superheroes do? They save lives, they try to eradicate the evil in the world... but surprisingly, many teens are superheroes too. Just like most of us. When we are in a UN Conference, we

discuss several solutions in order to save lives and basically eradicate the evil in the world, right?

When we play the game "How to save the world" we are actually empowering ourselves to make a change and to start thinking in other changes we want to make in the future. Don't let any thought nor anyone push you back from your dreams to make a change.

Future Yale Young Global Scholar, the best thing you can do if you are about to embark on this amazing IAS experience, is to be opinionated. The world wants to hear from you, people want to hear from you; your opinion is and has always been important. Share your opinion; use your voice.

I spent the best two weeks of my entire life in Yale with the greatest people I have ever met. People from all over the world, with different opinions and mainly people who are primary sources towards a topic. You open your mind to new knowledge, to new horizons; take the to new perspectives,

commitment to learn something new everyday.

Finally, take in consideration that it doesn't matter where you are or where you come from, if you have the desire to make a change don't push yourself back, instead think about how you can accomplish it. Be a peace-keeper entrepreneur. You might be thinking, "how can I accomplish a change?" well, I have always believed that the greatest power is our voice and the greatest responsibility is to make a change. Use your voice wisely. This is what Yale Young Global Scholars made me understand: if you use your voice to make a change, even if it is a small or a huge change, you can not only reach the stars but whichever change you want. If you believe it, you will make it.

With your voice people will learn from you; with your voice you empower your dreams to a reality; with your voice governments will hear the needs of the people; with your voice you can fight for what is right; with your voice you can change the world.

## Dana Kurniawan

### Introduction

My name is Dana, I'm a rising junior. I like looking for contradictions, absorbing split second moments and analyzing them. Also, I feel really energized and inspired when I'm working with curious and friendly people!

### Advice

With regards to the application, to be perfectly honest, of course your transcript has to be reasonably good, but besides that what I sought to do best was convey a much more insightful and personal side of myself. When it came down to actually writing the bulk of the application, which were the essay questions, I kept 2 things in my mind and nothing else. Firstly, that I am happiest in the synergy of willingly open and intelligent people, in being able to share common interests and have my curiosity constantly sparked. Secondly, that I wanted to forge friendships which would transcend borders and my time at YYGS. Keeping in mind first and foremost your motivations for

for wanting to attend YYGS in the first place helps present a much more cohesive and comprehensive "you" in the application. Therefore, find your motivations, and don't forget that the best person you can be is the very best version of yourself - strive to portray that and don't deviate from it.

If the outcome is not what you idealised, don't be disappointed! There are many opportunities out there and even after completing the application I actively looked for them, because in the end a meaningful summer with unique experiences and personal growth transcends even the knowledge gleaned from seminars or lectures. I personally wish you all the best!

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a hub of groundbreaking knowledge, motivated people and unparalleled opportunities. It is a place I can envision myself in (at least hopefully). Utilising its resources and opportunities through wholeheartedly investing themselves and continuously expanding their own capabilities is something I feel all Yalies try to do.

There is Yale's rich history and intriguing architecture, but beyond it I feel the factor that most significantly shapes everyday experiences boil down to the human interactions. From getting to know the instructors, simple conversations can be deeply engaging, and for me Yale would be ideal in being full of opportunities for wide-eyed conversations and personal connections.



# Carlos Flores

## Mexico

### Introduction

Hi! I'm Carlos, a rising junior from Monterrey, Mexico. I love drawing, singing along to my favorite songs, and dance anywhere, anytime. I want to build the first UCHC (or Universal Collective Human Consciousness), with the purpose of spreading and teaching human integrity, with the goal of sustaining and flourishing life and preventing catastrophe.

### Advice

In relation to the application procedure for the YYGS Summer Program, here are a few tips.

Before starting the application, you need to make yourself one important question, which you should ask yourself before doing or applying to anything else in life.

"Will I make the best of it?" Will you take notes and analyze the intensive lectures and enriching seminars? Will you be an active participant in discussion groups, capstone projects, and real life simulations?

Are you willing to make friendships with the rest of the participants, be open to their different opinions and culture, and to keep this bond after the two weeks? Will you put your best effort into every action you make and take a valuable lesson from it?

If you answer yes to all, don't waste time, start your application now!! Don't leave it last. Make an effort to finding alternatives to any obstacle in your way of applying. Put your heart into your writings. And have a mentor! Someone who can validate all your options, whenever necessary, and give you feedback. For the letters of recommendation, choose teachers or counselors, who know you well and can give YYGS a clear image of what kind of person you are. And finally, don't forget to put all your curricular and extracurricular information into the application form! Carefully read what is being asked of you.

### What is Yale for you?

Through my YYGS experience, for me, Yale is

an institution composed of people from all over the world, who have unique experiences, ideals, and backgrounds. They all come to this place, not just to focus on their studies or get a good name on their resume. It's where people who go beyond expectations, live and work together, in a friendly environment, using the tools and resources of the institution, to develop skills and rediscover their dreams. "Yale isn't a place to prove something to anybody; it's a place to LEARN something from everybody else."

# Yahya Muhyiddin

Syria and Palestine - United World College in Mostar

## Introduction

My name is Yahya and I am from the countries that are always on the news headlines these days (Syria and Palestine). However, I live in a country that makes the headlines once in a few years (Norway). Although I am fond of Mathematics and Physics, I am also in a long-term love relationship with history.

## Advice

The advice you are going to see the most is "Be yourself" which is an honest advice, of course. However, I believe that "Life is not about finding yourself, life is about creating yourself": Each one of us has a talent, a hobby, an outstanding activity about which they may not be aware. Each one of us is special and outstanding in their special way. So there is no one formula you can follow, but rather, your essays should be about you and you only. I thought about the essays for a long time – I thought about the stories and the activities that define me the most; the stories that taught me valuable

lessons or changed my deep-rooted perception about something.

Regarding your school report and grades, I personally had two options: either I choose easy courses and score very high, or choose challenging courses and develop myself. Your courses and how challenging they are matter a lot as well. It is always good to know that YYGS scholars are very diverse and they come from different educational systems: so each one of us has different skills and educational background. That is how our educational differences enrich the program. In YYGS, we do not receive grades for our assignments because we are not there for grades or credit but to enjoy education and to challenge ourselves in an academically rigorous program. I wish you all the best in your application process and I believe that you can do it!

It is all about "creating yourself" in the end!

## What is Yale for you?

For me Yale is the place where I belong. Yale is a place where I can speak up my mind and always expect constructive feedback in return. Yale community has become my larger family – whenever I need anything, there is always somebody at Yale ready to offer help. After residing in Pierson College for two weeks, I realized I started to call this place "home" – It felt exactly like home. I was welcomed with hospitality and treated with generosity – two unbelievably awesome weeks at YYGS.



# Clara Nevins

USA - Marlborough School

## Introduction

I'm Clara and I'm from Los Angeles, California. You will always find me getting into heated debates about politics and international affairs. I'm obsessed with my dogs, I love sushi and you can always trust me to find you a cool new restaurant.

## Advice

I have 3 pieces of advice that I would have liked to hear while I was applying to the Yale Young Global Scholars program. Number one—just submit the application. This program is truly life changing, and it isn't worth the procrastination and you should not convince yourself that the acceptance rate is too low. You miss 100% of the shots you don't take! Number two—be yourself. Ensure that your application reflects who you are and how you think. Don't use elaborate language to prove how intelligent you are, and be honest. Number three—everyone has their own important story to tell. At Yale, I really learned that no matter who you are, or where you come from, you have

something to contribute to the world. Try to convey your own narrative and make it a theme throughout your application. I met the most inspiring and incredible people at Yale, and I was fortunate enough to hear many of their stories. They each made me want to learn more about the world. I've never grown more as a person than in my two weeks at the YYGS program.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is an environment that fosters creativity, ingenuity, and confidence within young people. It is a place where the world's brightest young minds connect to form a lifelong network of friends. Yale has given me a new understanding of the world and my place in it. It is a place that encourages failure, praises risk taking, and supports unique ways of thinking. Yale challenged me and made me question my preconceived beliefs. Above all, Yale is inspiring—a beautiful campus in an interesting city filled with passionate and worldly people.



## Joshua Gorero

### Introduction

Hello there, I'm Joshua Gorero, a loyal Apple fanatic and an obsessed collector of Starbucks mugs. Traveling is a passion of mine, and photography is a hobby that I will always love. Other than international affairs, I am also interested in business and technology.

### Advice

To future YYGS applicants: Please don't apply on the last minute! When I was informed of this program, I could not decide whether or not I should go. I was unsure if I would like it. I kept putting aside the thought of applying to YYGS for weeks; but on the day before the application was to be submitted, I decided to apply. I spent a good portion of my night filling in the application. Please, apply to YYGS as soon as possible instead of doing it later.

When filling the application, mention your achievements and community work. Take time in your essays, and make sure that

you like what you have written in your essays.

Though at first I was unsure if I would like YYGS, I can say now that I am very thankful to have applied. I have met so many people from all parts of the world in this program. I have made friends that I wish I can see again. I learned so much from the seminars and the lectures, which I would probably not have learned in high school.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is a place of diversity. They offer so many classes that best fit what you want to study. People from all over the world who all have different backgrounds come to study in this institution. This institution also provides a diverse faculty group.

The YYGS program is a great opportunity for you to have an insight of what college life and learning will be. It is a very great program and I hope you will apply.

## John Karellis

Greece - St. Catherine's British School

### Introduction

Hey guys! My name is John and I'm from Athens, Greece. While I wish I had a cool story about either the amazing history of the country or the crippling debt of the present, I sadly do not. Instead, you can hear about YYGS.

### Advice

YYGS was a truly unique experience. Never before had I encountered such a group of people. Every single person I met at YYGS was excellent in their own way and I have no doubt all of them will achieve amazing things one day. Aside from their unquestionable brilliance, the ridiculous cultural diversity made an enormous impression on me. Just the idea of being in a room with people from over 100 countries at once was mind boggling!

So, what advice can one give to an aspiring Yale Young Global Scholar? When applying for the program just make sure to be true to who you are.

Don't try to be that perfect student that is a no-brainer because they have a 4.0 and 1600. The truth of the matter is every single one of you is unique. Bring that uniqueness to the table and show why you are specifically excellent in your own way. In short: be yourself. But there's also other things to consider when applying to YYGS. One of the most important things you can do is show that you want to challenge yourself and grow. For example, if you take AP courses, make sure that the courses that you take reflect your academic ability. Challenge yourself and show that you have a growth mindset and a thirst to learn. At the end of the day, intellectual curiosities is what YYGS is all about. Additionally, try and show how you make full use of the resources made available to you. Looking at another example, I go to a school that offers a wide range of extra curriculars. For this reason, I take part in debate, theatre, and I play basketball. If I didn't take part in any of the programs offered to me, I wouldn't be taking advantage of my surroundings,

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale represents two things: target and opportunity. Everyone who wants to apply to Yale needs to set high targets for him/herself. As a Yale-hopeful, I need to aim for the best grades possible and do what I can to be as well rounded as possible. While being the best you can be is anyway what you should desire, that position at Yale offers increased incentive. But why is it an incentive. This brings me to the second idea, that Yale represents opportunity. With all its resources and prestige, for me Yale is like a pot of gold once you secure a place. If you want to be a success, everything is there for you, it is your choice whether you use it or not.

# Isabella Stade

## USA - Madison Country Day School

### Introduction

I'm Isabella Stade, a 17-year-old rising senior from Madison, Wisconsin. More notably, I'm the student with a pencil case full of pens for different types of note taking, a planner with every hour written out, and a packed schedule of theatre, Model UN, and electives to top off the IB curriculum. On any normal summer I would have been enjoying the warm weather at home and maybe traveling. This summer was different. This summer I was a Yale Young Global Scholar.

### Advice

If I could impart any advice to a prospective YYGS student, go for it. I took a leap of faith in applying and it turned out to be the best two weeks of my life. I say this with no exaggeration, every essay and teacher recommendation, flight and car ride to get there, was worth it. YYGS is a sense of intellectual freedom to explore that let my mind fly free. I contemplated concepts and their intersection with other theorems, the teaching style of lecturers,

and the foundation this program was attempting to give us. YYGS was full of individuals from all over the world with unique perspectives I had never been exposed to. Make your perspective heard in your application and on campus, it is the value you bring to the community. Everyone had a story to tell and where they came from was a crucial part of that. I would have never pictured myself in a classroom as one of very few Americans, listening carefully as a student from Palestine and a student from Brazil debated neocolonialism, but those perspectives made every bit I learned so much more comprehensive and valuable. The YYGS is "global" for a reason. There is something to be said for having over one hundred countries represented in 250 kids. I felt that influence every day.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is where I was finally able to explore concepts freely and let that exploration be enhanced by the global community around me. For me, it was

where I found a sense of home and family. It is magnificent how many real, grounded relationships I formed at my time at YYGS. For me, Yale is the place where I met influential minds in their fields and was inspired to ask questions and then ran to get Blue State coffee with my suite mates after discussion section, talking about everything from ethical implications of global corporations to Instagram captions, on our way to the coffee shop. YYGS is the best choice I ever made - forming friendships that I know will last, and challenging my brain to think critically in new ways.



# Jake Hollander

USA - Amity Regional High School

## Introduction

I'm a determined person (unless math is involved) who likes running, martial arts, international affairs, political science, history, and other stuff too. I have a wicked sense of humor, though some just call me wicked, so consider me a very friendly combination of Batman and the Joker.

## Advice

My advice:

Don't be discouraged. At first, I had several reasons to worry: the relatively short time I had to apply, certain technical difficulties, and a slight issue in getting letters of recommendations. Nevertheless, it all worked out. This was true of some other friends of mine from the program, and some had even more daunting challenges. But don't worry, and don't be discouraged. These are problems that have been solved before, and also, the YYGS staff is there to help you. Also, don't ever, ever, ever tell yourself that you're too ordinary, or that you can't get accepted.

A lot of people thought they were too ordinary or thought they probably would not be accepted, and surprise surprise, they got in. The fact that you're even applying to this program means that you have the initiative YYGS likes, and that you're already probably involved with organizations that lend credibility to your application (ex: Model UN, Junior Statesmen of America) and give you a base knowledge and interest in international affairs. So, in short, if you want to be in this program, don't let technical details or unfounded human emotions stop you. Also, for your essays, let yourself shine. Whatever style or methodology you are expected to use academically, remember that it's your essay. Don't let other proofreaders (and I imagine you'd ask capable friends and family to look over) change its tone, meaning or general idea. That being said, polish it up. Be sophisticated. Keep your tone and mood, but sound like a polished public speaker. If you are the type who speaks in a basic and overly simple way, if you tend to naturally ignore

mar rules, now's the time to be more conventional with your sentence structures and grammar. Finally, do not procrastinate. It does not help you at all.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is prestige and excellence. In America, it is one of the best schools. So when it makes a summer program, it makes an excellent program, and one that it wants to make the best offered, which makes me proud and fortunate to have been accepted to and able to attend YYGS International Affairs and Security. And because it is one of the best, it attracts the best people. So when I met my friends there, I knew I was meeting some of the best in my generation.

# Roberto Garcia

Spain - The Taft School and Nuestra Señora de las Maravillas La Salle

## Introduction

When I see myself in the mirror each morning, I see a young and passionate Spanish man, who enjoys having a great time in life; from learning about Spinoza's philosophical ideas, to debate with my friends about politics and current events after playing an intense tennis match.

## Advice

My most important piece of advice is not to leave the application until the last week or days! For the 2016 edition, the deadline was in February 11th, which by coincidence, it is also my birthday. Unfortunately, I did not act too wisely during this admission process. Instead of starting early in Christmas, I had to do all my essays in the last two weeks before the period ended. This approach made me work for the entire last day of the, which was definitely not the ideal situation, since I believe that your birthday should be spent with your loved ones, rather than with your computer working all night. The earlier you begin your endeavour with this

complicated process, the less stress, and the more chances you have to come up with a final work that will make you proud of yourself, and hopefully, will impress the YYGS directors. If you do that, and you are honest of who you truly are, you will definitely do an amazing job!

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is like a big family, where everyone takes care of the rest. Your instructors give you many pieces of advice, like any big brother or sister would do, your professors teach you how to reason critically for being able to become independent thinkers, like any parent would do, the kitchen staff tries to make you happy in your important days, like your grandmother when she buys cake in your birthday... But most importantly, Yale is such an especial family, because you have so many different peers with diverse backgrounds, while at the same time, share the journey of finding one's place in this world.

# Renato Cesar Valentim

Brazil - Instituto Federal de Pernambuco

## Introduction

Hey, I'm Renato from Pernambuco, a state in the northeast area of Brazil. In the program, I was known as the WhatsApp guy! Yes, if you easily want to be known by over 100 people, just have the "brilliant" idea of putting each one of them in a single group in this app! Well, with this uncommon introduction, here comes a bit of my thoughts about the Yale Young Global Scholars program.

## Advice

The application process for YYGS when compared to the US universities is extremely similar. If you are already familiarized with it, I am sure you already understand that good grades will not be the crucial point to give you the honor to spend two intense weeks at Yale. Thus, when it comes to the application itself, my best advice for you, future young scholar, is: be yourself and SHOW to Yale your own special background. I am not trying to be cliché, but in the process of writing your

essays and doing everything required in this process, be as truthful and genuine as possible, because what Yale wants is to accept YOU, not the person you may try to create in your mind.

Application process aside, the question that begs to be asked is: "Why should you apply?" First, you need to understand that you are the only one responsible for making the most of this experience. With that in mind, I can assure you that YYGS will change your life forever. Personally, every lecture and seminar was incredibly meaningful to broaden my horizons to new perspectives and concepts. Also, the capstone project gave me the privilege to speak out and share my ideas to a global audience. Last but not least, every single person that I met added a special piece of their background in my life. Indeed, I went to the US as a Brazilian; I came back to Brazil as a world citizen!

Words cannot describe the spectrum of feelings that people in the program feel. Then, if you really want to be part of our team, just apply with all efforts and live this experience with all your heart.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is not only a place with a gorgeous campus filled with renowned professors; Yale is a place that challenges you to do your best every day. For me, Yale is a university where you can explore your passions and discover new ones. For me, Yale is a place that has all the necessary tools to shape you in the leader you want to become but, above all, Yale is a place where you can definitely call as a second home. I invite you, to be part of this big, global family.

# Daniela Limas Garza

## Mexico - Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Irapuato

My name is Daniela Limas, (I go by Dany or Dan). I come from a very small city in Mexico. I am a very lively, passionate person, with a love for learning and meeting new people. I am incredibly blessed to have been a part of YYGS 2016; it has been, by far, the best experience of my life.

*"Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do."*  
(Rob Siltanen)

Well, here's to the people who chose to believe in the crazy. Here's to the people that decided that it didn't matter where you came from, but where you wanted to go. Here's to the people that heard our voices, here's to the people that decided to listen.

Here's to the people of Yale Young Global Scholars.

I then remember the overwhelming whirlpool of emotions that was unleashed to the words of "Congratulations! You have been accepted...". But now that I think of it, YYGS did not begin the moment we all got our letters. Nor did it end the moment we grabbed our suitcases, reluctantly gave over our keys, and clung to each other sobbing. YYGS began years ago, the moment we all, in our own particular way, slowly building up for this moment. Each of us had fought different battles: some coming from

countries that were rising from the ashes of conflict, some who will be the first in their families to attend college, some who had faced hardships within their families, communities and schools. Yet all of us had a special flame, a spark that burned with the passion and the desire to make a difference. Without realizing it, everything we ever did, every dream we turned into reality, every bridge we built, every obstacle we beat was leading up to this. To now.

Yale took that spark in each of us and turned it into a fire so bright it could no longer be ignored. And this is how the chain starts; each of us shared his or her light with the rest of us in such a way it was no longer about being noticed: it was about being remembered. We burn with the passion of those who shared their stories, we are alive with the dreams of those of us who still believe that amidst all the war

and hate and terror, the voice of a few is still powerful enough to be heard. We grew up hearing that we, the youth, are "the future". Well to those people I say: look at us. Because as of now, we are burning so bright we can no longer be ignored.



## Ken Tanaka USA - Leland High School

### Introduction

One of the most common things I hear when I introduce myself is, "Hey, you're the guy on Glee!" While my name is Ken Tanaka, I'm not the same Ken Tanaka featured in that TV show. I'm something better—a YYGS IAS alumni that spent one of the best times of his life at Yale in the summer of 2016.

### Advice

To help you on the path towards YYGS, I'd like to give some advice for all you future YYGS applicants. First—don't procrastinate. I'm saying this from personal experience. Take your time responding to the questions. You want to really show why you should be admitted into YYGS, and the worst way to do that is by speeding through the applications because you're stressed on time. Take this application seriously. Another piece of advice—make sure you understand yourself. If accepted into one of the YYGS programs, you're going to be at one of the

best universities in the world, being taught from some of the best and brightest in a particular field of study and working with an international pool of students. To ensure that YYGS will be enjoyable, you should make sure that you like what you are getting in to. Don't do YYGS just because of the name. At the same time, YYGS is also a place to explore. Don't be afraid to apply just because you are not dead set on what major you want to be or what job you want to have. At YYGS, you'll encounter a diverse range of ideas and experiences that might help you along that journey of finding what you enjoy learning about and doing.

While I've talked a lot about the application process, I want to leave you guys with one piece of advice that can help you truly enjoy your time at YYGS. Take the opportunity to meet as many people as you can! At YYGS, there are people from all around the world that each hold different stories—you can learn a lot from them,

and they can learn a lot from you. Don't be shy to make new friends or step out of your comfort zone!

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is the place where I got a blister on my thumb from playing too much Frisbee, ate pasta daily for the first time in my life, and bonded with my suitemates over the sketchy state of our shower stall. Yale is also the place where I made lifelong connections with people from all different backgrounds, opened up my mind to new perspectives I'd never considered, and took a big step forward on the journey of my life. Yale is where I spent one of my best summers ever, and I hope you can have that experience too!



# Molly Liu 刘楚月

## China - Shanghai Pinghe School

### Introduction

My name is Molly and I'm from Shanghai. I can dance ballet to hiphop songs and vice versa. Murakami is my favorite writer and during YYGS program, I had a great conversation discussing Murakami with a (quirky) Pakistani guy with a speaker in his backpack playing great music.

### Advice

Giving advice is not exactly something I'm good at, but I'll try my best:)

The deadline for YYGS is around mid-February when most Chinese are on holiday celebrating our Spring Festival. I remember staying up, not for the Spring Festival Gala (which is not worth watching anyway), but for finishing up my YYGS application. So my first advice would be, start your application as early as possible because you don't want to be exhausted by it when other members of your family are having a great time. The admission portal opens at the end of September which gives you plenty of time and you can always go back and edit it before submission.

Moreover, I think the essay is the most crucial part of the application. 不求高大上, 只求☑人心 (For those who don't speak Chinese, this is your loss;) Talk about something you really care about, not something that you think the admission would care about. Although this sounds cliché, be true to who you are.

Another question that a lot of students may ask is whether standardized test scores play important roles, because the average SAT score posted on the official website is 2250 which is pretty intimidating. My personal answer for that question would be not really. I only submitted my TOEFL score because my January SAT is delayed and I was pretty sure that it wasn't good enough. What I'm trying to say here is don't let standardized test score be a reason to stop you from applying. YYGS program is looking for much more than just test scores and academic excellence. They are looking for the potential in you to get the most out of this program and bring what you learn back to your community and bring solid changes.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is where I discover a new way of learning. Coming here with excitement, passion and an open mind to embrace new ideas, nevertheless, I was still shocked by the overwhelmingly broad range of perspectives and knowledge my peers have. Wait, did the admission make a mistake accepting me into this program? Because I didn't feel smart enough to be here at first. This gradually changed as I switched from Chinese learning style of purely receiving knowledge to engaging myself in discussions and exchanging ideas with other brilliant minds. It turned out that I had the most extraordinary two weeks of my life <3



# Muhammad Haysam Azhar

Pakistan - Roots IVY

## Introduction

I spent my entire childhood where Osama bin Laden spent his last years, the small but beautiful town of Abbottabad. Good place to retire this, not a bad choice Mr. Bin Laden.

## Advice

For the application process, I can only convey the advice that was conveyed to me when I was going through the application process. 'Don't let the application process consume you'. Write to the prompts freely and cheerfully. Be yourself, the beautiful homo sapien that you are. Pack well, it is extremely important that you bring all essentials to the program so that you do not have difficulty during the course of the two weeks you're going to spend on campus. Choose your seminars wisely and you must take your time with the selection. A significant amount of your time is going to be spent attending seminars, better spend it well and with the ideas that actually interest you. Also, bring a fan, you will be thanking me later.

'While you're on campus, be like a thick dry sponge' said Mr. Ted Wittenstein, the very first day we gathered in the Daveis auditorium. At that point in time, nothing in life made more sense than this particular statement which is why I still remember it. Future scholars, this is the advice I'm going to convey to you as well. You let go of your perspectives and 'absorb' new ones and once you are done, make your evaluation. Here there are two possible outcomes, either you break free of your own paradigms or you build on the perspective you had prior to coming to the best summer program in the world. It is unarguably a win-win.

## What is Yale for you?

For me,  
Yale is love: It is a place where one can truly let go. Everyone speaks truthfully and speaks honestly about their opinions. It is a place where everyone is accepted, welcomed and loved.  
Yale is life: From the moment you wake up, to the moment you go to bed,

you can feel the liveliness on campus. People singing, dancing and cheering. Talking about ideas, unity and world peace. Not sure where the energy comes from, but it is definitely there.

Yale is lit: 260 Scholars representative of 110 different countries around the globe and all 50 states in the US. Doesn't get any better than this.



# Louis Gordon

USA - Glenbrook North High School

## Introduction

Hello, my name is Louis Gordon. If the YYGS family was trying to describe me, some might say that I am an athlete, a bad dancer, an overpacking maniac, a music listener, a card player, or an ice cream eater. The YYGS family knows me best as an ally and a friend.

## Advice

I had just returned from YYGS - Beijing (everyone should apply for YYGS - Beijing), and I had one week to complete the entire YYGS application. Desperate to finish, I began frantically searching for my responses to the YYGS - Beijing application, and realized I had never saved them. My first piece of advice: when applying for anything, save all of your responses, it's worth it. It took three days to rewrite what I hadn't saved from the Beijing application, but I was finally ready to submit my final product. As I clicked through the pages of the application, I stopped suddenly when I reached the teacher recommendations. I realized at that moment, four days before

My second piece of advice: identify teachers who you love, and ask them for letters of recommendation early in the application process. Trust me, running from office to office begging for a letter is neither fun nor pleasant (for you or your teachers). Only four hours before the deadline, I hit submit. Although I applied ridiculously late, I felt proud of my application because it did a great job of highlighting my strengths and presenting my passions. My third piece of advice: YYGS is looking for unique individuals, your application should prove that you stand out and shine. Each YYGS session is a special moment where hundreds of outstanding people come together as one, to learn and live together. The goal of the application is not to show that you'll fit in at YYGS, but that you'll stand out within your new family.

## What is Yale for you?

I spend my schooldays sitting in class and learning about the history, culture, language, geography, politics, and

and current events surrounding a specific place. I leave school, study, and return to take a test on that place. Regardless of the grade I receive, I still failed. Sitting in school, we never have the chance to truly learn a place, because we can't learn the people. That is what Yale and YYGS afforded me - the chance to finally understand the people that accompany the places I studied in school. Making friends from all over the world, I can take their stories and give these places context. I can give the world life.



# Ananya Kalahasti

USA - Hathaway Brown School

## Introduction

Hi, I'm Ananya, and I love to bake. As someone with too many interests to name, I've spent my summers and school years looking to connect things like food, diseases, politics, and just about everything else because I always wanted to try and bring everything together, and I love meeting new people who I have something in common with.

## Advice

I applied to YYGS because I wanted to meet people like myself. I'd switched schools in 6th grade because I found that caring about the world and caring about my education wasn't found "cool" at my old school, and I always felt ostracized because I wanted to keep learning, and I wanted to spend my summers doing the same. The education system in the US seems to always be built upon competition, but honestly YYGS isn't like that. While yes, it's an incredible program hosted at a top caliber university, the program thrives upon being full of real people with extraordinary stories

So while someone might tell you that the way to get into a program like YYGS is through rattling off accomplishments of grades, activities, volunteer work, if accepted, your role in the program is just to be you, because that in and of itself is the most unique perspective you bring. The best thing I learned from YYGS is how important it was to be a real person, with real experiences and stories, which inspired real opinions. If there's one thing I could advise future applicants on, it would be to really let their own personalities and unique interests show in the essays and really to dig deep to figure out what side of themselves they want to share, because everyone at YYGS is insanely talented and well accomplished, but the thing that sets each person apart is what they've had the opportunity to learn and see in their lives and homes.

## What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is resources. Getting to study the Israel-Palestine conflict in a seminar and then going out and talking to the

Palestinian boy who was in your class is where you realize how valuable the experiences of others truly are, and how you can keep many different perspectives in your own mind. Being surrounded by people who care just as much about the world and learning about it as you do makes you realize how important global knowledge is, and there's truly no better way to learn that than through the amazing peer students YYGS brings together to learn from.



# Daniella Lys Ineza

## Burundi - Gashora Girls Academy

### Introduction

Have you ever heard about Burundi? This is where I come from. A small country near Rwanda characterised by likeable people, just like me. Who am I? Daniella Lys Ineza. A girl passionate about International Relations/African Studies, a Computer freak and who will graduate in 2017 from Gashora Girls Academy in Rwanda, where I currently study.

### Advice

I'd heard about YYGS from my university counselor but was not sure if I would ever get accepted. I knew that they were looking for strong student profile, which I wasn't sure I corresponded to. Even so, I decided to apply anyways because I knew that I won't lose anything, and also because of the "who knows?" question that was constantly whispering in my head. I took my time, and prepared my application neatly. However, that didn't prevent me for sending my application few minutes before the deadline.

accepted since I was coming from a country incomparable, not as strong as those I would meet. I didn't have strong notion about International relations but just knew that I wanted to learn more about it, especially because of the political crisis my country was facing at that time. I also thought that the language part would reduce my chances since English is only my third language. I gave myself so many reasons of not being accepted that I even forgot that I once applied. The decision felt on a April 1st. I first thought of a prank from friends before jumping everywhere after the confirmation that it was true. I got into YYGS! So for you who is reading this, the advice I would give is to adopt the "JUST DO IT" attitude towards YYGS application. The rest will be for another day.

### What is Yale for you?

For me, Yale is where I accepted that I was capable of something; where I gained in confidence and self-esteem

that I was so lacking before. I met some of the most talented, smart, crazy, kind-hearted, and full of potential students I've ever got the chance to meet, and got positively influenced. I am sincerely thankful of the chance I got to meet people from all over the world, with all different cultures, perspectives, but all sharing the same and unique interest, to understand the world we live in and act upon the mistakes made to create a better world favorable for all and governed by only justice and love.



# Yale Young Global Scholars



[www.globalscholars.yale.edu](http://www.globalscholars.yale.edu)