



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **Riverside Youth Council to Conduct Mock City Council Meeting Dec. 11**

*New approach designed to engage young people in community affairs*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Riverside Youth Council is pioneering a new approach for engaging young people in community affairs by holding its first mock City Council meeting on Wednesday (12/11). The public, especially students, are encouraged to attend this free event.

The meeting, which will feature young people deliberating on city issues and casting votes on how they think Riverside should proceed, is scheduled for 6 p.m. in the Art Pick Council Chambers adjacent to Riverside City Hall, 3900 Main St.

The Riverside Youth Council (RYC) was established in 2004 by the City Council. Currently under the mentorship of the Riverside Police Department and the Office of the Mayor, RYC is made up of students from the Riverside Unified School District and Alvord Unified School District.

The RYC has recently focused on choosing Riverside's 25 Most Remarkable Teen recipients, supporting the MLK Walk-a-Thon through encouraging youth participation, and organizing the annual Youth Summit, where they provide workshops and give students the opportunity to learn from speakers about entrepreneurship, community involvement, team building and much more.

This year, upon recommendation of Mayor Rusty Bailey, the RYC is working to encourage increased youth participation in the understanding of city governance.

The mock City Council meeting is designed to mimic the real thing, right down to the agenda and the amount of research being done ahead of time. The future leaders now on the RYC have created a process for holding a mock City Council meeting that can be used in following years.

In preparation for the upcoming meeting, RYC members have worked together to choose policy topics, interviewed sitting councilmembers, reviewed real City Council meeting agendas and reports, and watched videos of real and mock City Council meetings to prepare.

“This really helped me learn about all that goes into a council meeting,” said RYC co-chair Yussha Haque. “You really have to be informed if you want to help create the best options for the community.”

The students will participate in self-assigned roles, including those of the Mayor, City Council members, and City Clerk, allowing them the opportunity to experience the process of policy making. As their main topic of discussion, students assigned to play the role of staff members will make recommendations to improve safety at City Hall and in the Art Pick Council Chambers.

“I wanted there to be an opportunity for students to better understand policy-making through hands-on experience,” Mayor Bailey said. “These students are Riverside’s future leaders, and they have blown me away with their level of interest and curiosity about local government.”