

Every year the Public Policy Institute hosts the American Youth Congress. On March 25th 2006, the 6th annual conference took place at the Civic Center in Asheville, NC.

Titled, "I Can-I Will" the conference was attended by over 200 students and 17 faculty members, who represented 19 schools.

The youth congress was organized so area students could gain hands-on experience in proposing, drafting, debating and passing legislation at the Local, State and National level. "We try to make it as realistic as possible, Once the students have met, they lobby their idea, present it and propose a cause of action."

After the youth assembly, the participants are encouraged to take their ideas to their state, local or federal representatives. Issues such as the state lottery, environmental concerns and economic development strategies are just a few topics that have been brought up in previous sessions.

Some results from the surveys:

The average age of participants - 16

Most Admired Man- George Bush

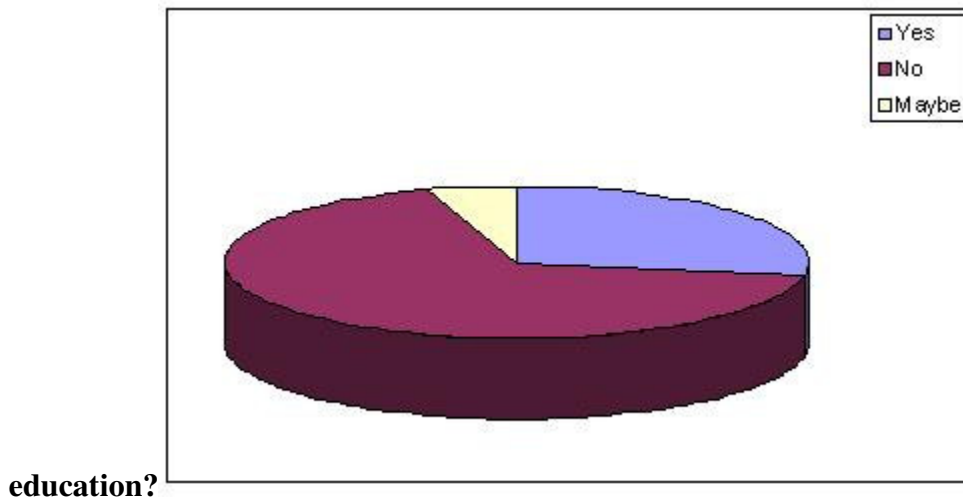
Most Admired Woman- Oprah Winfrey

Most Admired Person Overall- Dr. Condoleezza Rice

Most important problem facing the country today

1. George Bush
2. Iraq War

**Do you plan to stay in Western North Carolina after finishing your**



## **Awards**

**Best Presentations** - Tuscola High; Owen High; Erwin High; Crest High

**Best in Debates-** Lloyd King (Erwin High); Leah Downey ( Asheville High); Will Walker (Tuscola); Laurie Shealy (TC Roberson)

**Most Effective in Lobbying-** Eliadah Academy; Davidson River

**Best Legislation-** T.C. Roberson; N. Buncombe; Enka Middle; Tuscola High

**Best Overall** - Hendersonville Middle; N. Buncombe; Tuscola