

Day of Service Project in a Box: Invention Convention

Overview: The Yale Club of Hartford has established a relationship with “Invention Convention”, an organization that encourages students from pre-kindergarten through high school to develop and present their own original inventions. The national organization is active in over 20 states and offers an excellent opportunity for Yale clubs to get involved with young people interested in creating novel ways to solve problems.

Target Audience: By getting involved with Invention Convention, Yale clubs can help young people to explore potential opportunities as inventors, entrepreneurs and innovators. Clubs can focus on one or more age levels: elementary, middle, or high school.

Volunteers: Yale alumni, their families and friends can get involved in the program. Since many of the competitions occur in the month of May, current Yale students home for summer vacation can also get involved.

No prior experience is needed. Volunteers typically serve as judges at local competitions and are generally provided training the morning of the event. The Invention Convention welcomes judges from all educational backgrounds.

Location: Competitions are typically held at local high schools, colleges and universities with large amphitheaters or meeting areas. The locations are organized and set up by the state Invention Convention staff.

Time: Competitions most often start at 8 AM, and finish by 3 PM. The coordinators of local events may offer breakfast and lunch for participating judges.

Process: Details on how Yale clubs can get involved are provided on the national Invention Convention website: www.Inventionconvention.org/YaleClub

If your club is interested in learning more or wants to get involved, contact the local Invention Convention leadership using the link on their website to get started.

Role of Yale students, alumni, family and friends: Each local Yale club can determine its level of involvement. Initially, club members, friends and family can serve as Invention Convention judges. They might also organize events, serve as an Invention Convention sponsor, and provide awards to participants.

Preparation:

- Meet with your state Invention Convention leadership and arrange a role for your club to play.
- Promote opportunities to your Yale club members.
- Set up planning meetings in advance of competitions.
- Identify and obtain any needed supplies, such as nametags or Yale pins for club participants to wear. Encourage your group to wear Yale insignia clothing.
- Prepare certificates for prizes to award student inventors. You can contact the Yale Club of Hartford for examples of awards and best practices.
- Maintain a list of participants and follow up with them to get feedback on the success of the event, and to encourage future participation with the Invention Convention.
- Collect ideas and recommendations for expanding and improving future involvement.