

NIAMH SPURLE

MYP for Northern Ireland 2007 -2010



much more than I thought I could. I never thought that I would be introducing Nick Clegg in front of 300 people, or sitting beside the Speaker of the House of Commons in such an historic event let alone speaking in the House of Lords! UKYP has also opened the door for me to visit China with the British Council.

In my area, the provisions for young people are little to nothing. Watching the situation in Northern Ireland politically also made me want to do something. The politicians could not agree even to work together let alone work for young people. I wanted to change this. I was active in different organisations before I joined UKYP and it was through one of these that I got involved. It has made such a difference in my life and I couldn't imagine not having joined UKYP now.

I have learnt so much since I joined UKYP. 4 years ago, while I had been on stage for my theatre group – it was normally in the background. Now, I have had two principal parts in two years, purely because my confidence in public speaking has soared. I can communicate with most people – even if I do have to repeat a couple of times because of my accent. Facilitation and bringing out any ideas other young people have is a skill I have also developed.

In the 3 years I was an MYP and a PG rep I achieved so

To make the most of your time as MYP you should involve yourself in as much as you

can. Raise the profile of UKYP in your area. If there is an event try and publicise the fact that you, as a young person representing young people, will be attending. Don't have any fear in what you do. You will achieve a lot during your term

and if you make life better for even one person, sure you've achieved something. Enjoy the Annual Sitting and meet as many friends as you can, it is one of the best places EVER to be able to step outside your comfort zone.

MY TOP FIVE TIPS

1. **Speak up!** – Don't be scared to voice what you think. There might be people there who seem much more experienced but don't let it put you off – they were new once as well. You could have the best point of all, so don't let your fear stop you from sharing.
2. **Manage your time well** – school, college, university come first. Don't let studies creep to the side for a UKYP event. It'll still be there after you have done your exams.
3. **Participate as much as you can.** Take the opportunities that UKYP give you. It might sound like it's going against my last point, but as long you have the time to do things, DO THEM. You could end up at an election rally in the USA, representing the UK in China, taking part in a BBC documentary- possibilities are endless... DO IT!!
4. **Cheesy but have fun!!** Needs no other explanation!
5. **Keep in contact with other MYPs.** You will meet so many new people from all over the country and without doubt you will go away from things like the Sitting and have loads of new friend requests on Facebook. You never know where your new UKYP friends will take you!

HARRISON CARTER

MYP for Sheffield 2009 - 2010



During my term of office, I've worked on two local campaigns: getting young people back in politics, and improving the accessibility of mental health facilities in my local area.

Nationally, I was one of the first MYPs to give evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee. The evidence session was regarding the future of aviation.

I also took the Political Education campaign to 10 Downing Street in a meeting with the Prime Minister's Advisor on Youth Affairs, and a member of the No. 10

Policy Unit. I also spoke at the National Teen Health Summit, worked with the Department of Health in devising strategy for young people governance schemes in hospitals and had recommendations published in the Healthy Child Programme.

The House of Commons debate was the highlight of my year with the most unprecedented amount of media interest imaginable. I was part of that with interviews on BBC Breakfast News, BBC World Service, and the most amazing for me, walking into BBC Television Centre for an interview on BBC Radio 4's Today programme with Justin Webb and James Naughtie.

Being an MYP has taught me that you can't do too much. Do a little, but do it a lot and to the best of your abilities. I've also learnt how to interact better with politicians, speak to journalists, handle myself in all kinds of situations and keep a

clear, hard working, level head. This can only be done with the help of UKYP staff who offer lots of support. If you see an opportunity, work your socks off to get it, and if you think you're doing too much, pull back a bit and prioritise issues effectively.

You don't have to get on the radio, or start major campaigns to be a success. For many young people, helping them get information about their transport services, letting them know what politics is, is much more useful.

MY TOP FIVE TIPS

1. **Keep a clear head.** If someone requests the attendance of an MYP, or if you are invited to an event, get full information before your go, always consult with your Support Worker and make sure you feel comfortable.
2. **Be reliable.** Keep on top of emails, keep on top of meetings, keep a diary. This is vital!! People want you to work with them and you need to show how great an organisation we are at empowering young people. The only way to do this is show them you are bothered.
3. **Give it a go.** If you are unsure as to whether you have enough experience to take part in an opportunity, then think again. As an MYP, you learn everyday, believe me. Don't be disheartened if you think you can't do something, take it as a learning curve and next time you'll be an expert.
4. **Don't take on too much.** Do what you can, what you think is necessary and fair, but don't overstretch yourself. Studies are very important.
5. **Be equal.** Remember, you represent every young person in your constituency. They are all important as each other. Try and get them all involved. Get out there, show your face, let them know who you are.

CHARITY MHENDE

MYP for Solihull, 2008 - 2010



This year has been absolutely amazing. I have grown so much and have been blessed with amazing opportunities. I was elected as one of the Media Reps for the West Midlands and have been heavily involved in media work.

It was a year we made HISTORY by being the first non-MPs to debate in the House of Commons, so my job was to make sure the press knew about it and I worked my hardest to make sure that we got recognised. I did interviews for BBC World service, BBC News and not to mention many mentions in newspapers and

online press across the country. My biggest achievement was being on the BBC News and Radio 4.

Along with that, I have been able, along with my fellow MYP/DMYPs, to get through a whole campaign for the year in our constituency which is a first. It just goes to show that if you do persist hard enough you will see it through until the end.

I have definitely grown in confidence and now I can see that anything is possible if you take the opportunities that come your way. I think I have learnt the art of networking and liaison because communication is key if you want to get something. So pestering journalists or decision-makers goes a long way and you could make links with people that could help you a great deal in the future.

To make the most of your year, make sure you go to meetings

and get as involved as you possibly can with everything that goes on.

Also to make sure you work hard to represent the young people because as we know it's a representative role and young

people should be at the core of everything. You always have to remember as well that you get what you give, so if you work hard and put in the work you will get loads back in return in terms of amazing experiences.

MY TOP FIVE TIPS

- 1. Make the most of every opportunity!** There will be so many opportunities that come your way and you have to keep your eyes peeled because if you blink you could miss something that could impact your life forever.
- 2. Don't be scared to try something you've never done before.** You will meet so many people and be thrown into unexpected situations and you just need to put on a brave face and pull through it. It will all be worth it in the end.
- 3. Communication is key to everything.** If you have questions about anything don't be scared to ask anyone around: youth workers, staff, fellow MYPs etc. And spread the word of campaigns you're involved with.
- 4. Have a good balance of everything.** For some people being involved in UKYP means they end up sacrificing their social lives. It shouldn't be like that. We are all young people with separate lives from UKYP so you should always make sure you get a good work/life balance.
- 5. Have fun!** You are in for an amazing year and need to make the most of meeting new young people and being involved in an ever-growing organisation. It's an amazing and coveted chance that you have been given, so don't waste it.